

28/29
OUTWORLD 2.50 **WRLDS**





BILL BOWERS Outworlds

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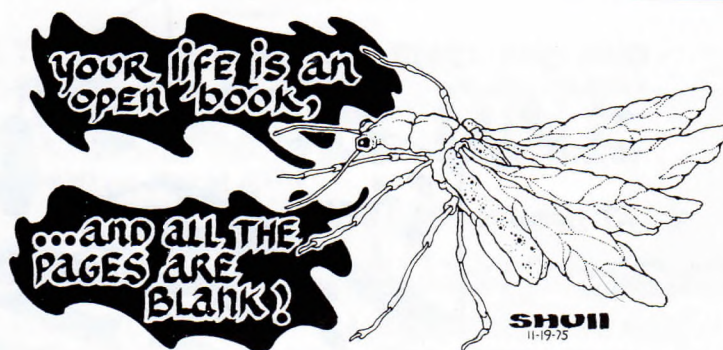
STEPHEN E. FABIAN.....	Cover.....	1101
ROY PORTER.....	Inside front cover.....	1102
BILL BOWERS.....	FROM WILLIAM'S PEN.....	1104
LEAH A ZELDES.....	ALL MY FRIENDS LIVE FAR AWAY.....	1105
ANDREW J OFFUTT.....	OPINIONATION.....	1107
DEREK CARTER.....	MIDWESTCON 1976.....	1109
POUL ANDERSON.....	BEER MUTTERINGS.....	1123
ROBERT A. W. LOWNDES.....	UNDERSTANDINGS: THE HEALTH-KNOWLEDGE YEARS.....	1125
.....	MONTAGE '76.....	1133
JOE HALDEMAN.....	THE BALLAD OF STAN LONG.....	1137
NEAL WILGUS.....	INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT SHEA.....	1140
J. R. CHRISTOPHER.....	THE RILL BECOMES A RIVER.....	1143
GREGORY BENFORD.....	SOME DAYS.....	1144
SUSAN WOOD.....	ENERGUWOMAN.....	1147
.....	WESTERCON COMICS.....	1149
DAVE LOCKE.....	THE FANWRITER SYMPOSIUM.....	1154
STUART GILSON.....	A FOLIO.....	1162
RANDY MOHR.....	Inside back cover.....	1167
BRIAN SULTZER.....	Back Cover.....	1168

ART: TERRY AUSTIN: 1144; 1147 * HARRY BELL: 1140 * DEREK CARTER: 1109-1122; 1154 * VINCENT DiFATE: 1137
 STEPHEN E. FABIAN: 1160 * PHIL FOGLIO: 1124; 1142 * DAVID R. HAUGH: 1128; 1131; 1145
 RANDY MOHR: 1107; 1108; 1132; 1146 * JIM McLEOD: 1105 * McLEOD/PEARSON: 1138 * JOE PEARSON: 1123
 BILL ROTSLER: 1103 * JIM SHULL: 1104; 1127 * DAN STEFFAN: 1139 * BRIAN SULTZER: 1125

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from William's Pen

BILL BOWERS



...but, he said repeatedly, *Outworlds* is *not* dead; it's only resting. Bill, on the other hand, was definitely not resting; he was busily going where no Bill Bowers has ever gone before... A bit hesitantly here, a little awkwardly there...but nevertheless, he left loose, giving full rein to emotion rather than logic, reaction rather than preplanning *everything*...and was able to (and it was as surprising to him as much as anybody) do so to such an extent that, while it bemused, amused, and confused the friends of longer duration, he held onto to them, while making new friends: loving and caring, going and living--a process that, once started, just seemed to keep on mushrooming...and it all ended up comprising the first ten months of this, the best year of his life!

...and now he says, Behold! Proof that *Outworlds* Lives! (And Better Than Ever, he not at all modestly adds.) Bill, on the other hand, is *still* not resting: he is overextended, over-involved, overcommitted...and thoroughly overjoyed by it all, even if just a bit overwhelmed!

...and he suspects that he may well become overbearing about it all, while he is attempting to achieve an overview, overall. So why not? All new converts are zealots; I am not immune.

Overnight it *seemed* to happen, but surely I overlook the obvious?

I have this thing about tying the happenings in my life back to certain Significant Happenings. I have neither the fortitude, nor the space to go back and chronicle too many such Moments--but Torcon II and the first Windycon marked two such turning points in my life. (And, it may well be of interest to two others to note that this is being written on the eve of my departure for the third Windycon--how far I've come in those two years...how different everything is, and yet, how very much the same everything is!) (That is known as being esoteric; it is not "fair" in a mass-circulation fanzine--but this will not be the only such instance of the practice: I'm no van Vogt, but several of my editorials have been written to register on different levels for different people. It is a game...but a rather serious one.)

The Significant Happening (in comparison to several significant happenings) this year for me had to be Confusion 12, January, in Ann Arbor. If I were to diagram, or, more accurately, flow chart the events that now program my life, I suspect that most would lead back to that weekend--not all directly, but many definitely by association. *Outworlds* 27 went to the printer a couple of weeks before Confusion. Except for the handful of you who happen to be in MISHAP, most of you have seen nothing from me since. Most of you have been remarkably patient, but you are naturally a bit curious as to what has happened to your money, or to your contributions...

I sometimes feel that I "owe" you an explanation--not an excuse, or an apology (this is still, after all, a fanzine, and by definition I can be as capricious as I like with such a thing) ...but what this *is* are words to say, Hey, I'm still here; I may well disappear from time to time...but I've always come back. And I suspect I always will...in one form of print if not another. For the patience of those who *didn't* see me at a convention or a party virtually every weekend this summer, and particularly for that of the contributors, my sincere thanks. I can't say it for you, but I do hope this issue is worth the wait. It is a good issue; I am pleased.

Although I *do* consciously pre-plan the placement of certain items in my fanzines to achieve a desired effect/reaction, I don't do it all the time (and I am both puzzled and amused by some of the things that people read into the way I have assembled a given assortment of materials to produce an issue). Still, the Shull illustration up top there, and Leah's poem, opposite, are both Significant...both there where they are for a reason. Neither is, by any means, an absolute (and Leah wishes me to point out *when*

her poem was written), but both have their Truths. For me.

No, I'm not saying that "nothing happened" prior to my going to Michigan in January--that I suddenly emerged from my Very Own Cocoon at age 32. In fact (no promises, mind you) I have probably loosened up enough so that, over the next year or so, I will probably be writing more, and with more candor than I ever thought possible, about the why and the where of whence I come from; a roadmap for me of the rather circuitous path I took to get where I am today...which is still, in truth, only a very new beginning. I think I am a rather "open" individual--and yet *no-body* really knows me; I am always on guard and conscious of protecting that part of me that makes me *me*, instead of me just possibly being you. (Once again, the words fail me--I am not a wordsmith; I try to put it all out there, but sometimes I feel the total illiterate.) I am a product of everything I've ever done, not done...dreamed of doing. I have my own personal history/heritage/track record. And yet, somehow--this year was started with a clean slate, a blank page if you will. I don't know--you explain it to me!

Leah's poem is another matter. Read it; read what I write here; then read the poem again. There are ties. (But I can't put it that straight-forward; essentially I think I am saying the same thing she is--but I've never done anything simple and uncomplicated in my life!) One of the basic "problems", which I have gone into in MISHAP, is this "BNF thing" I, egotistically, picture as having been hung 'round my neck. I guess, to many, I am a Big Name Fan...although I certainly don't *feel* like one a lot of the time! I won't deny that, being the living cliché of what makes a "typical" fan--an ultra-shy social misfit who is the oldest child and wears glasses--I won't deny that I have spent fifteen years *working* to be accepted and acknowledged by my peers (and by Buck Coulson), striving to become a Famous and Respected fanzine editor/producer. But, having attained all that to such a degree that I detect envy (and, damnit, "awe") from some other fans, I have to ask myself...was it worth it? I'm not about to go through the whole rationalization process that has occupied a fair portion of this year, but the conclusion (as of the moment) is thus: While I find myself unwilling to accept the "responsibilities" of BNF-hood (as I see them: being everything to everybody), I'm not at all reluctant to accept the "benefits" thereof. In other words, although I have not yet read Ayn Rand's book, and although it goes against everything I was raised to believe...I have discovered the Virtues of Selfishness. I will rarely intentionally hurt someone I care about, but if it comes down to a choice of doing for them...or doing for me...there's really no contest--even if it involves doing for them so that they will think the better of me for it...

I don't *think* I'm paranoid about it, but I do sometimes (when I'm "home", alone) wonder if the people who spend time with me do so because I'm me, or because I'm Bill Bowers, Big Time, Big Deal Faneditor. It is, I think, a valid question. The answer, of course, is that some do, some don't. The "fame" is useful for making contact; it is a detriment if it is the only reason for maintaining that contact...if you follow me. And, despite the fun I've had with the whole "groupie" schtick, and while I've certainly "used" it, that is *not* what I want: What I want, what I need, is friends who care for me in spite of the "image" rather than because of it.

...and that's what Leah's poem is all about, for me. You see, I *do* have friends on that level (and a motly crew they are)--and it is both a chest-swelling Hey! I've made it! feeling, and an extremely humbling experience rolled into one. These very special people, a few "old", a number "new"--are what control my life these days. Unfortunately, they are scattered all over--my "home" these days lies somewhere between Chicago and southern Michigan by way of Toronto--and most are just as mixed up as I am... *"my friends all live far away most in body--some in mind"*

"I miss her very much...but it's nice having somebody to miss." --- Jon Singer, 1976

You see, if there's any such thing as a very up "down"...I think I've found it!

What I have to keep realizing is that the majority of you *don't* know where I disappeared to...where I've been/where I've gone/what I've done...this year; and yet it is so very easy to assume that, of course, you do. I can't, in any way, begin to tell you everything--not unless you've ten months to spare--but a couple of things I must tell you...

¶ I did not take the TAFF trip. (I/GAVE/UP/ENGLAND/for/BECKIE/FRANKEL) Seriously, when the charter flight fell through, and I decided to give my half of the money to Roy, I did so *not* because I'm a Nice & Generous Guy, or any of that shit: I did so for a very personal and a very selfish reason. Things didn't work out quite the way I'd hoped...but I've no regrets. None. (I do appreciate, more than you'll ever know, those who voted for me, and those who understood. I'll make it over there yet, someday, folks: BRITAIN IS FINE IN 79!)

¶ By the time this sees print, I will most probably be the sole primary owner of Outworlds Productions, Inc. A lot of things have happened between PghLANGES. To say that I've changed, is to put it very mildly...but so has Ro, in many ways. We have decided, jointly, and free of outside influences, that friendship is much more important than partnership, and so we have taken steps to insure that the important things take precedence. As Bill Mallardi could tell you, as Joan could tell you--I'm a bastard to work with, particularly when I'm in the throes of producing an issue. I'm not being noble or anything--in fact, I've never been more totally selfish in my life--but I don't want to subject a third person to that on a continuing basis. Let's put it this way: If there was ever anyone I could even consider going into partnership with, it was (and is) Ro Lutz-Nagey. That he saw that it wasn't--given my present rather unsettled state--going to work, and volunteered to relieve me of the pressures, is something that I'll be eternally grateful for. I suppose people will talk and speculate, but believe this if you believe nothing else that I write here: the "parting" was amicable, and covers the "business" only. The friendship remains...and will. Thanks Ro...for the faith, the help, for everything.

¶ I'm going to go with it...the Corporation, that is. Some of the plans are detailed in the back of this issue; others will be announced/advertised as appropriate. I'm going with it, but I'll be doing so at my own pace...which, given the fact that I could well pack up and move to Chicago or southern Michigan over a weekend, will probably be slightly erratic for some time to come. Hang in...give me your faith, your support, and your patience--and I'll make it. [As of now, the North Canton box is the Official Address.]

¶ I don't know how to say this, and I certainly don't know what to do about it, but OW 23 no way in hell deserved the FAAn Award for Best Single Issue of 1975. I honestly didn't imagine it would "win", or I would have withdrawn it. In my mind, at least, that award will always be "owed" Jeff Smith...but what to do now...? (The other one I accept with a rather large grain of salt.) Of course, next year--when I'll "deserve" the Best Single Issue (for this)...I won't get it. I'm not on the Committee anymore, you see...

¶ ...speaking of Mike Glicksohn, as much as I hate to agree with him on anything, I must agree with one statement he recently made: that becoming a Worldcon Fan Guest of Honor is quite possibly the highest honor fandom can bestow. I only hope that the Phoenix people know what they've let themselves in for--but I'm pleased, surprised...and flattered to an extent I can't possibly describe. ...and I expect every one of you to be there Labor Day weekend, 1978, to watch me make a fool outta myself! (I am doubly glad that Harlan is the pro Goh: because I can't think of anyone who has deserved it more...and because, with luck, he'll be the center of attention...which means that I can, hopefully, relax and enjoy the hell out of myself! And I fully intend to do so.)

¶ There's no way that I can adequately apologize to several of my contributors in this issue for the delay--nor to those whose material I've held for long periods of time but will have to return now because they were squeezed out of this issue...and simply won't "fit" in either my "new" fanzine, or the pro OW--but I must at least try to apologize to Poul for not getting his column printed until after the copyright bill was passed...and to Joe Christopher for not getting his poem printed a bit closer to the Bicentennial 4th.

My first convention was the 1962 Worldcon in Chicago; my thirteenth, the 1969 Worldcon in St. Louis. Windycon, this weekend, will be my thirteenth convention this year, with at least three (and possibly as many as six) more to go to before year's end. (And that doesn't count parties, picnics, or just plain visits that I've taken off for; there was one incredible stretch in June, July, and August, where I was "gone" eight weekends in a row...) Don't ask me what happened...all I know is that my personal finances are a total disaster...but that it was worth every single cent of it. And do I have the memories from this year...!

...of a speech I made at Confusion, people telling me afterward it was good; I wish I had been there! # ...of mistaking somebody tall, with long dark hair, for somebody else tall, with long dark hair...and living to rue the day # of clam jokes and other calamities # of what a fantastic kick it was to be a guest of the A² people # memories of Boston in February and pain and hurt between those I love deeply # of Columbus in March, and of the fact that I did rise to the challenge flung at me by dubbing Mike Glicksohn the Very First Official Bill Bowers Groupie, in public no less (obviously it had to be someone short and cuddly...and someone I'd slept with at a con!) # of witnessing Gay Haldeman make Andrew Offutt, porn writer, blush...simply by blowing him a kiss # of introducing Randy Bathurst, who has got to be the only person in the world more nervous than me... # of a Wondaycon party and snogging and friendships begun # of farewells in Baltimore #

MY FRIENDS ALL LIVE FAR AWAY



my friends all live far away
most in body -- some in mind
that leaves me lonely
sometimes, late at night
and I cry myself to sleep

tears are strange to me
when they come
warm wetness on my cheeks
running down my neck
a few trembling silent sobs
so unaccustomed

funny how in the daytime
they never come
are tears creatures of the night?
I once wanted to be
a lady of the night, you know
but I was too frightened
and much too young
I guess I'm still the same
inside

paranoia is the worst kind
of fear
it never lets you rest
always aware and watchful
I am tired
sometimes I wish I didn't think
that everyone is out to get me
that everyone hates me
that my friends will all hate me
if I'm not perfect

and I'm very imperfect, you know
please don't expect too much of me
I try too hard
and fail too often
I never meet my expectations
don't make yours as high as mine

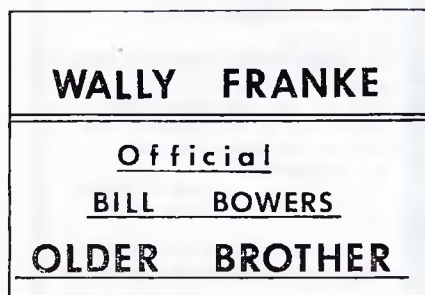
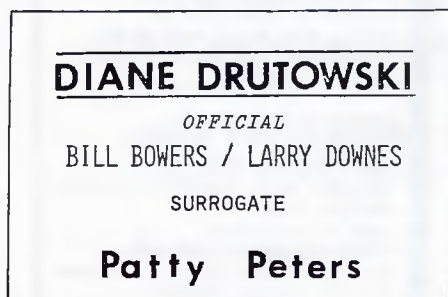
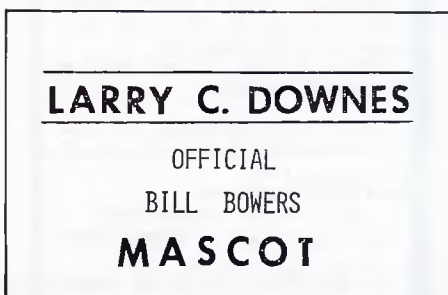
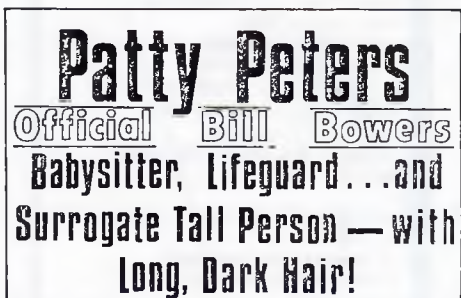
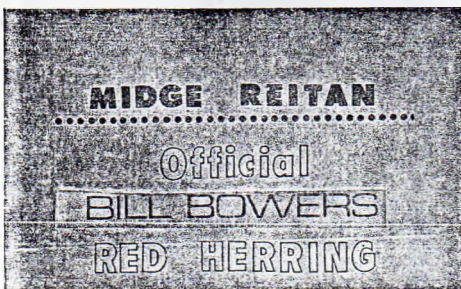
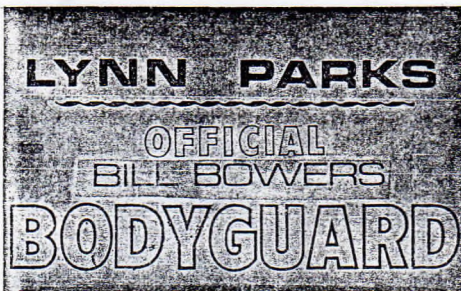
the world revolves around expectations
everyone expects the sun
to come up each morning
and go down again each night
I wish that one day it wouldn't
just for variety

consistency is boring
and really not a virtue
though people think it is
everyone wants everyone to always
act the same
with no variations
I can't always be the same
perhaps I'm not part of everyone

Emily was right
it must be dreary to
be somebody
but being nobody can be a drag too
especially when everyone
that is, all the somebodies
expect you to be somebody too
because the world was made
for somebodies

---Leah A Zeldes
June, 1975

First published in *Dreamtree* #6



of "walks around the block" in wee hours of the morning # of Autoclave Ups & Downs and long, long talks # of actually having the nerve to read Harlan's "tribute" for Mike's birthday in public! # of Linda telling me that in 30 or so years I may be fandom's "next" Bob Tucker (I'll take that as a compliment...Hi Bob!) # of a picnic that wasn't a picnic # of Midwestcon...introducing Lynn to "that idiot standing on a chair in the middle of the room!"...and spending time on the hillside # of a week in Chicago, and a weekend in Wisconsin where I discovered this strange "lump" growing out of my leg (you too will rue the day, Steph!) # of Mike sacked out on Ro's front lawn # of a very nice weekend in Toronto ~~to celebrate my birthday~~ --do you realize that my birthday is not only Lunar Landing Day, but Viking Landing Day now? Neat! # Calling up Tony Cveto, asking him how bored he "really was" and going to Rivercon # a weekend journey to Chicago & area with Patty and Larry # meeting Dave Locke who is *so* taller than Glicksohn; the tape measure lies! # of MAC, incredible, "heavy" things happening around me...new friends made, old ones seen much, much too briefly # of a "birthday party" in Detroit the was marked with incredibly long talks --but where all but three of the people who mean the most to me were gathered in one place, at one time # of PgHLANGE and more heaviness, but a new friend made... # of anticipations and apprehensions of what's to come, this weekend...and the next...

It has been a year! The photo spread here is an indulgence, I freely admit. The "name badge game" is both serious and frivolous--there will probably be more. (In case the background prevents the first two from being legible, they are: "LYNN PARKS--Official Bill Bowers BODYGUARD" and "MIDGE REITAN--Official Bill Bowers RED HERRING".) For all of you, those waited and wondered, as well as those who've had to put up with me in person, this: When you love, when you care...go with it!

This issue could be, and is, for many people--but it must be Dedicated to Four Very Special People who have become a part of my life this year ... and who must accept some of the responsibility for the delay of this issue: To the slightly incredible Lynn Parks...and to Leah Zeldes, Patty Peters, and Barb Nagey...with my deepest Love and Admiration. May all of your years be as good as you've made this for me!

---Bill Bowers 10/14/76

+++++Most of the regular 'features' were squeezed out, but these two letters should fit:+++++

ROBIN MICHELLE CLIFTON: Ro Nagey is right to an extent, but for the wrong reasons. Finding nothing on Quent is quite logical, though the article itself explains why that would happen, if he'd bothered to read it closely. Finding nothing on William Wright, alias Dan DeQuille, is inexcusable, however. Am trusting you have both a sense of humor and a sense of honor, since there is no Quentin Wilson, never a *California Watch*, and never a *Quarter Revolt Quarterly*.

I invented him as hero of stories I used to tell the Moose, my now-11-year-old little sister. Eventually I started writing the Wilson stories down, and finally, in '73, began mailing them out. Not one has ever been rejected. I've also done a full-length play based on the character that won the 1975 Phelan Award in its category here at SJSU. Everything in a Wilson story is researched and established fact--except for items directly concerning Wilson or his cohort, Banter Dingus. Moreover, somebody did do most of what he does; I simply roll a few dozen old west rogues into one.

You might say Quent's a Bicentennial April Fool, or an attempt to make people aware that history is merely a matter of who records what, not necessarily what actually happened, or a crack at showing small press and fanzine people traditions dating back far beyond 1930 (there were earlier fanzines, as I'll document when I have genuine evidence), but in essence he's a mammoth practical joke perpetrated primarily for my own perverse pleasure.

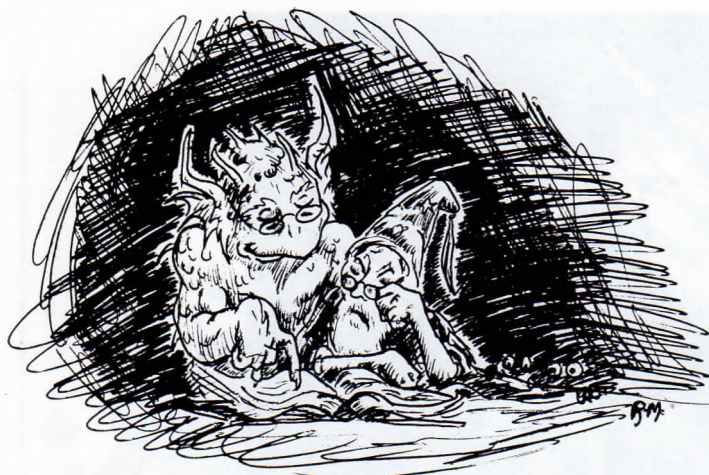
I had hoped to let the *Outworlds* readers fight over whether my article was genuine or not, the definitions of 'fanzine', and all the other issues raised, sitting back laughing and learning until Guy Fawkes Day, in October, when I'd write you an anonymous letter blowing the whole thing open. However, with Ro so close to guessing (though, I repeat, for all the wrong reasons) I thought I'd better tip my hand now, lest you learn by accident and be pissed. [February 6, 1976]

I wasn't pissed, but I was a bit disappointed--I WANT to believe in a Quentin Wilson! I've told no one tho, since getting this--and here it is, October. OW #27.5 will reveal how many readers were "taken in"...a fair number they were!

BILL ROTSLER: THE STORY BEHIND THE COVER (isn't that the way they used to print it?): The photo cover on *Outworlds* 27 was shot about 1964. It might be interesting to some how it was done. At that time I was in the process of doing a photo comic strip called *The Explorers*. It was much like *Star Trek* in that there was this ship exploring, etc. (After all, that's the perfect TV series format.) In the process I wanted to do a kind of prologue, showing men on various worlds, etc. One of these shots is that cover. (The comic strip never got going--photo comics just didn't excite the American editors, although this process, called "fumetti" is very popular in Latin countries... They didn't know where to put it in the paper & then I found out that no "continuity" strip had made it in the previous 10-12 years. There went \$4,400 dollars.)

I did the setup using miniature figures, garden plants, and styrofoam balls. Behind it was a 2 x 3 foot piece of rear projection screen material in a frame and a slide projector with a slide from an observatory. I lit the foreground, kept the back dark. I shot the front, turned off the lights. Then I refocused on the rear screen, recalibrated the exposure & shot that. Double-exposures are easy with Hasselblands. [received February 18, 1976]

+++++



believe and the direction in which I plan to continue striding.

Yeah, this Offutt is a corny man.

On the walls of his office are various little signs, ranging from Sir R. F. Burton's personal motto *Mada' al-kull* (Arabic; This Too Shall Pass) through Oliver Wendell Holmes's "A man should share the action and passion of his times at peril of being judged not to have lived" and Fritz Perls's "I do my thing" and so on motto to Ursula Le Guin's "To learn which questions are unanswerable, and not to answer them" and even the anonymous "When the ceiling falls in on you, BUILD something with it!".

A corny man, Offutt or even offutt.

He has no belief in existentialism or predestination or the futility that is the basic plot of the seeming majority of what we insularly call "mainstream fiction"; it is so prevailing as to seem a philosophy. I call it Futilism, and consider it less honorable, less decent, less human (and more degrading to humanity) than feudalism. I am a man with a love for the semi-hero or the un-hero or reluctant hero in fiction, the person who is *human*; contempt unto hatred for the anti-hero; the same feelings, mixed with some sorrow, for those who write of him or her.

How futile! What a sad and demeaning public admission of the writer's own personal feeling of futility!

It follows that I have the most minuscule regard for those who perpetrate critical "book reviews" and worse, what they are pleased to call "literary criticism". Name me all the critics who rent and rended Dumas, the parasites biting the creator who outlived them all--by centuries. I am an egoist; it is part of my personal philosophy. Yet I am not arrogant enough to "review" books or perpetrate "literary criticism". I said *positive*, remember?

In this striving for the ever positive attitude, I have endeavored to eliminate all use of the word "but" from my spoken and more profitable written words. Nor will I answer questions that begin with "but" and "yes but" and the cowardly attempt to intimidate, "But don't you think that--".

And I'll tell yall this, as a statement of fact, a brag, and a challenge: My knee does not jerk.

That puts me out of step--sorry, unintended!--in an era marked by use of yeahbut and argument by intimidation and the constant reaction by kneejerk. Oh--by the way...I don't believe in taking much crap from anyone. Jerk your knees at someone else...but not at my officers.

Another...brag, while I am telling you about me. The first time I met Betty Ballantine was at one of these Nebula affairs in New York. In 1971, I believe. That thrice-handsome lady repeated my name reflectively. "Offutt. Yes. I know your name --you're in our new anthology. Yours is the *odd* story."

I had a sinking feeling. Ogod. In front of all these people?

"Yes," Mrs Ballantine went on after that unintentionally terrifying pause, "yours was one of the stories with a plot, and a beginning and ending."

That is--I believe the highest compliment anyone has ever paid me. Yet what a condemnation of the other writers in that book whose stories made mine seem so "odd"--and old fashioned!--and the editor who bought those stories!

So. That's the sort of old-fashioned American believer in the inseparable unity of capitalism--democracy and the Individual you now have as president. Now here's how some of these things I've said apply to sf.

At a party Dave Locke gave last night for just-us-fans--I am a fan of his writing--Milt Stevens told me about an oletime writer he'd recently met. This man, as "Frank Bridge", wrote

and sold a number of sf stories, including *Mechanical Bloodhound* in *Wonder Quarterly* for Spring, 1930, and *Via the Time Accelerator* in the January 1931 *Amazing*, and the novel *Warlord of Venus*, which appeared in the September, 1930 *Wonder*.

Mister Bridge, whose real name I won't here reveal, says that he "got out of sf writing because the field bacme too complex."

((Long silent pause))

Yeah. No further comment on Mister Bridge. The field *was* becoming more complex--as SFWA has in ten years. SF has become more complex until there now exists a convoluted and commingled complexity of styles, of methods, of sub-genres--and ideas as to what both writing is and what sf itself is or "should be".

In 1933 a writer made a large splash in the microscopic millpond of sf--it was stf, then--with a story called *Shambleau*. Actually that story was barely sf; it was an unusually well-written horror story set on another planet. So was that writer's *Black Thirst*, another Northwest Smith story published the following year. For a long time, horror fantasy, chillers and thrillers, had been characterized by careful, good writing, and an emphasis on people. C. L. Moore brought those into sf, and made the field better and more complex.

Years later, first Ray Bradbury, with people-stories in high poetic prose--as opposed to prosaic writing--and then Philip José Farmer and then others made loud splashes, too. Hey, it doesn't have to be SCIENCE-fiction, and it can be written beautifully, about seemingly real people and believable, even sympathetic aliens.

Naturally others attempted to do that, and to "bring sf into the mainstream".

There followed a lot of prettily written, often pretentiously written sf and "sf" that often had little or no plot, often reflected the Futilism I believe results from an immature inability to understand Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre; exercises in style, mood, "poetic writing" that often wasn't. Oh, and groovy yaha stylistic trickery. Coexistently there was SCIENCE-fiction, often Idea stories, Gimmick stories, that were accepted for publication even when they were rather poorly written. They still are, too.

It is both an error and a damned shame to let writers and "writers" get away with that.

This is not to say that there aren't among us fine writers of SCIENCE-fiction, and some poor writers of science FICTION.

Now some writers are seemingly better educated in the humanities. Some writers are concerned with style and plot, and characterization, and often there's some "real science" in their work as well. The field, Mister Bridge, certainly has become more complex! Much in it is also better. OK, put quotation marks around that in some cases; "better".

So we've Arrived, right?

Hell no! So long as a story contains some depth of character, some *human* values, good writing--knees jerk and we pile praise on it, even when its plot is an old plot, a *bad* plot, a "plot" with holes in it sufficient to accommodate a big Peterbilt truck-trailer rig. Yet we're so thrilled by the sizzle that we fail to inspect the steak, and we pile nominations and even awards on them.

It's both an error and a damned shame to let 'em get away with that, *and* heap on such positive reinforcement that if they improve it will be *in spite of* us...impressionables.

Our collective knee is jerking.

Elvis Presley sings pretty well these days--and maybe if you sneered at that statement it's because your knee jerked?--your mind was immutably made up fifteen years ago? I resent the years and years during which "we" piled praise and wealth and fame on him--while he was learning to sing. With that kind of supportive reinforcement for mediocrity and worse, it's a miracle he improved.

With a sigh, though, I see the current situation in sf as a Positive.

Surely the stylists will see the necessity for story and learn to write them. Some already have. Eventually the stylists and/or careful writers who *are* writing stories will begin to *construct* those plots, closing the doors on flaws and plotoles. Some have. And, *if* editors function as editors rather than as readers and schedulers and space-arrangers, those poor practitioners whose stories are bought because they have *Science* or *real* ideas in them...will begin to study the language, and other writers; will begin to *write*.

Then we will have the best damned sf ever.

And then we can start putting the word "WRITERS" in the "S.F.W.A." all in caps.

--- andrew j offutt

Los Angeles 4/10/76
Kentucky 6/10/76

DEREK CARTER

FIRST A NOTE, to all those who came gently unto my sketch pad, stepped lightly round the incredibly tall person who was standing guard making sure I didn't overreach myself and grow an inch, and asked to see the two sketch books that never seemed to leave my side during the entire convention: You may find a few of the drawings you saw there missing. We have either edited them out, for personal reasons, or, in the case of about three or four of the cartoons, they are now scheduled to appear in *Xenium* according to Boy the hairy wonder. As for the rest, they are all here as I promised Bill they would be on the first Thursday night that we met again after so long a parting. Glicksohn says this is my return to fandom. Considering the fact that I've always hated con reports, yet here I am writing one, I guess the twit must be right.

Monday, June 28th 1976

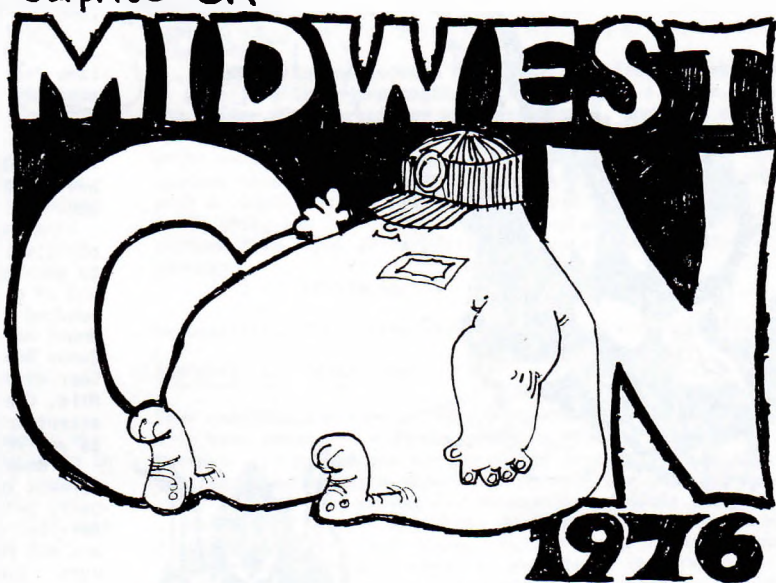
EIGHT O'CLOCK in the morning. It has been a restless and horrible night for one who will no doubt claim a niche in fannish history as the leader of sunburn fandom; so, by convention standards, I have arisen early.

The hotel lobby seems strangely empty--lost and leaving souls meander around as I wander through feeling a little lost myself. A vague notion that it isn't really all over leads me downstairs--well, the Dealer's Room *is* closed bigod, and so for one last look at the pool...

How still it is. But they haven't turned off the noise for it is still there, ghostly and lingering, shimmering with people now gone for another year as I walk around the pool, up to the bank at the end that seemed to be the center of my first Midwestcon. And I stop and see them all again--Glicksohn, Stephanie, Terry, Gay, Joe, Mark, Ro, then Randy waddles through, Bill the Bowers appears briefly then click!--someone called Barbara. Damn. Turn, see the chairs from the last party on Sunday night, Glicksohn again, Ted White, a pair of forgotten sneakers. Slowly the noise seems to subside but in turning, as I pass the diving board--thru-a-dub-du-splash--they all come rushing back--click, click, click....

and now THE BILL BOWERS CRANKY FILM AND DIRTY KNICKERS ARCHIVES along with MICHAEL GLICKSOHN'S BRING 'EM BACK SCREAMING TO FANDOM FOUNDATION present.....

The Return of a Prodigal Much To His Own Surprise OR



A
PRODUCT OF THE
FANTASTICALLY
INCREDIBLE
ANGLO-HUNGARIAN
DUET TRA-LA.....

Thursday, June 24th 1976

IN REALITY this madness began with Glicksohn. Where else in Toronto could it really have begun *but* with Glicksohn? A little Chivas had flown under the gulleys when the hairy one suggested that I come to Midwestcon.

"What's Midwestcon?" I asked.

"A sort of social sprawl rather than a convention."

"Oh really?"

"Yes really--you look empty." Pause. The one that convinces in this case.

"O.K. Er--I'll come." A little later he told me about someone I should meet.

"5 ft 11, brunette and Hungarian."

"Glicksohn you twit, I'm in the process of getting divorced from a 5 ft 11 brunette Hungarian."

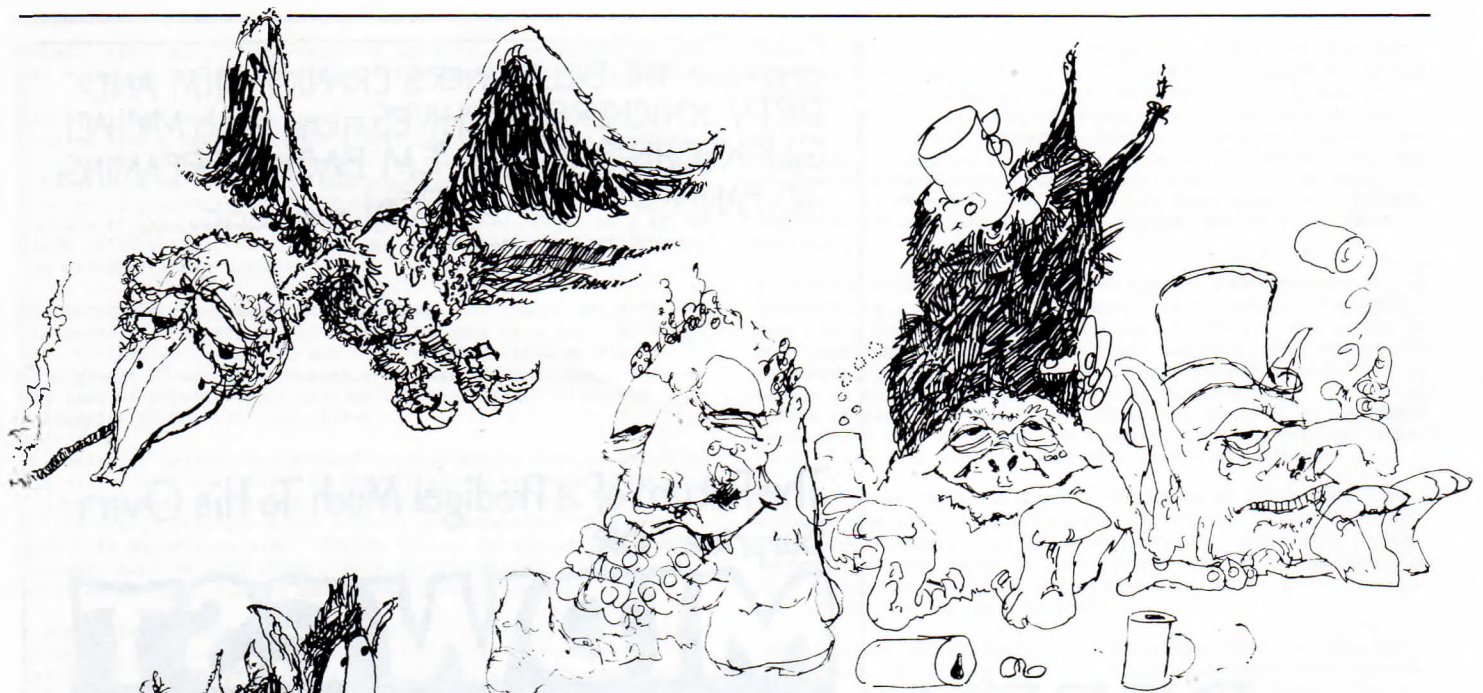
"Yes but that one was an accountant."

"So?"

"This one is an artist."

Glicksohn has a way of saying 'artist' that can make me cringe. I cringed. Oh ye of little faith...

A week later, a new bottle of Chivas and I was being told that I *had* to come to Midwestcon because Bill, Joe, Gay, and



Randy plus a few others had been told DEREK WILL BE THERE and besides Bill had told the 5 ft 11 mystery person that 'she should meet me'. I wondered if *she* cringed when Bill said 'artist'...

Anyway at three o'clock in the afternoon Pete Edich hauls his almost indefatigable soul in his Torino through a traffic jam to pick me up, then to Pete Dawson who came equipped with a huge bag of gorp (a health food nut's guide to good eating for six hundred miles), then onto the abode of the hairy one who will no doubt be wearing the same shirt, pants and leather bag when the Queen dubs him Sir Michael in 2036 (or rather the King as Charles should be doing the regal bit by then). Don't worry, Mike, Charley is a good lad and will no doubt weather your eccentricities with as much aplomb as you weather mine. As long as you return the sword afterwards...

Onward and onward. And it started. Why is still a mystery. Perhaps the long break from it all, the absence of a myriad of badly printed fanzines, the prospect of Bowers and Bicentennial America, who knows, I don't, but the pentel never stopped moving and out poured drawings that must have been laying there for ages. Every so often something would lean over, chuckle and disappear back into a green, yellow, brown, white or just plain yuck publication in the other corner. The gorp travelled back and forth and we went through customs.

Pete the Edich had no I.D.

Just who was Pete the Edich? That small fact must have been a little annoying because they decided to treat us, gently, like probable saboteurs and threats to his majesty the President. They didn't find the Sten gun nor Pete's criminal record wherein he tried to sink England by pulling the plug in Watney's Brewery. So, United States, the four most unwanted things in Christendom came unto your soil. And soil it they most probably did.

This entire escapade at the border threw me off a trifle and I scribbled around before finally hitting my stride once more as one hairy thing goosed another. And any snide remarks about what the two Englishmen were doing in the back seat to inspire such a drawing will be treated with the contempt it deserves because if I stand on Mike's shoulders we'll be able to punch you right in the kneecaps, or at least pretty near your kneecaps, see fella!

Bowers. I burst in on him with one of my typically rude greetings.

"Hello you disreputable shithead, where's the beer?" and was amazed to discover that it didn't phase him. Then, realizing that he was so far up and I was so far down, it became obvious that he hadn't heard me anyway. But we did get a beer and old hairy received a very late sorry-I-didn't-make-the-one-shot-for-your-birthday-zine illustration as I sat contemplating both strange American beer and my sketch pad. Mad William asked for, guess, some artwork. I must have been out of my colonised skull.

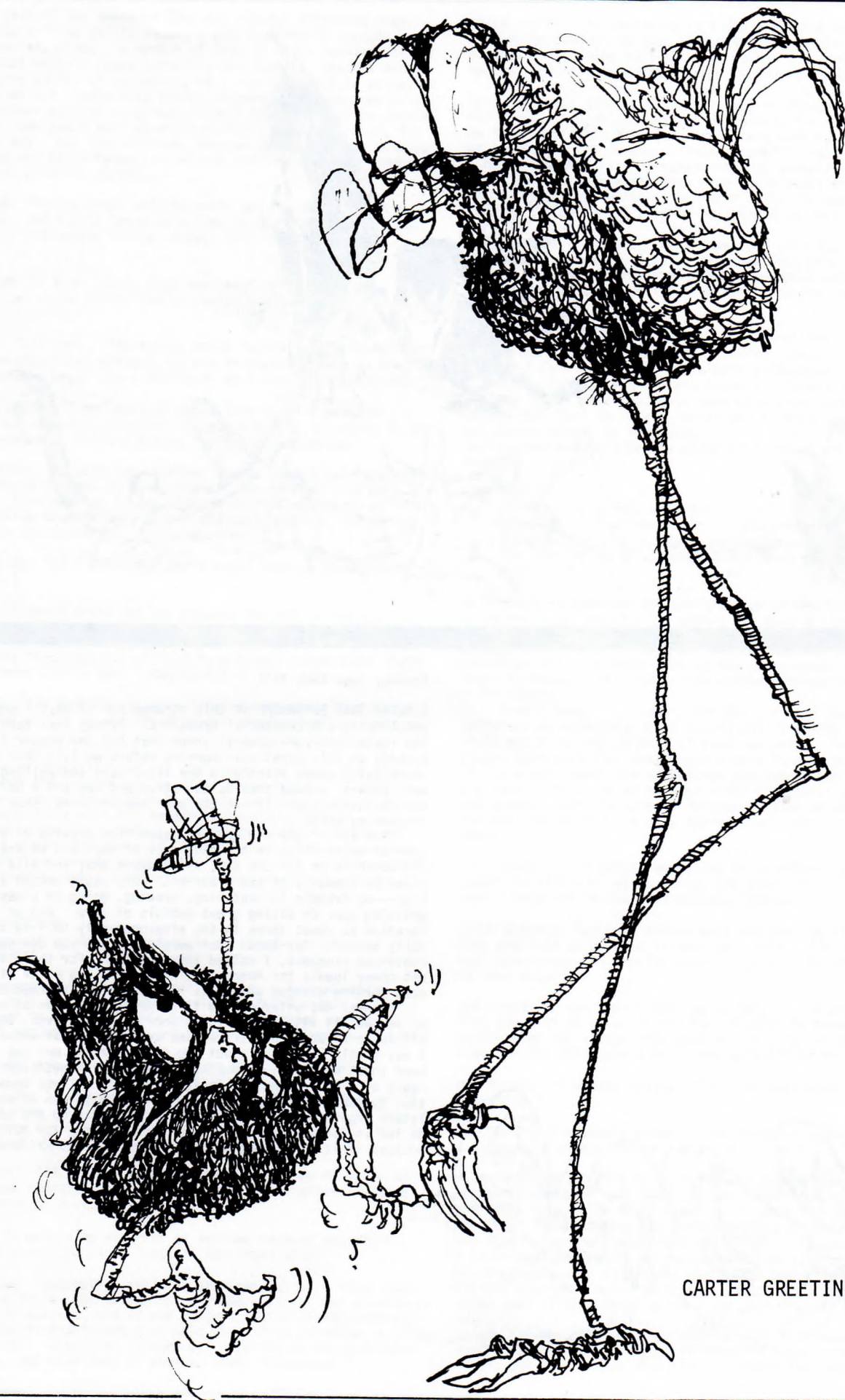
"You can have it all in a con report."

"I've heard those promises before."

"I'm a differnt man," came the retort.

"Oh yeah---" Well, Bowers, now whaddya say now dat it's all in your mouldy ole Ohio hands, huh?

Then, to quote the diarist, 'and so to bed'...



CARTER GREETING BOWERS



Friday, June 25th 1976

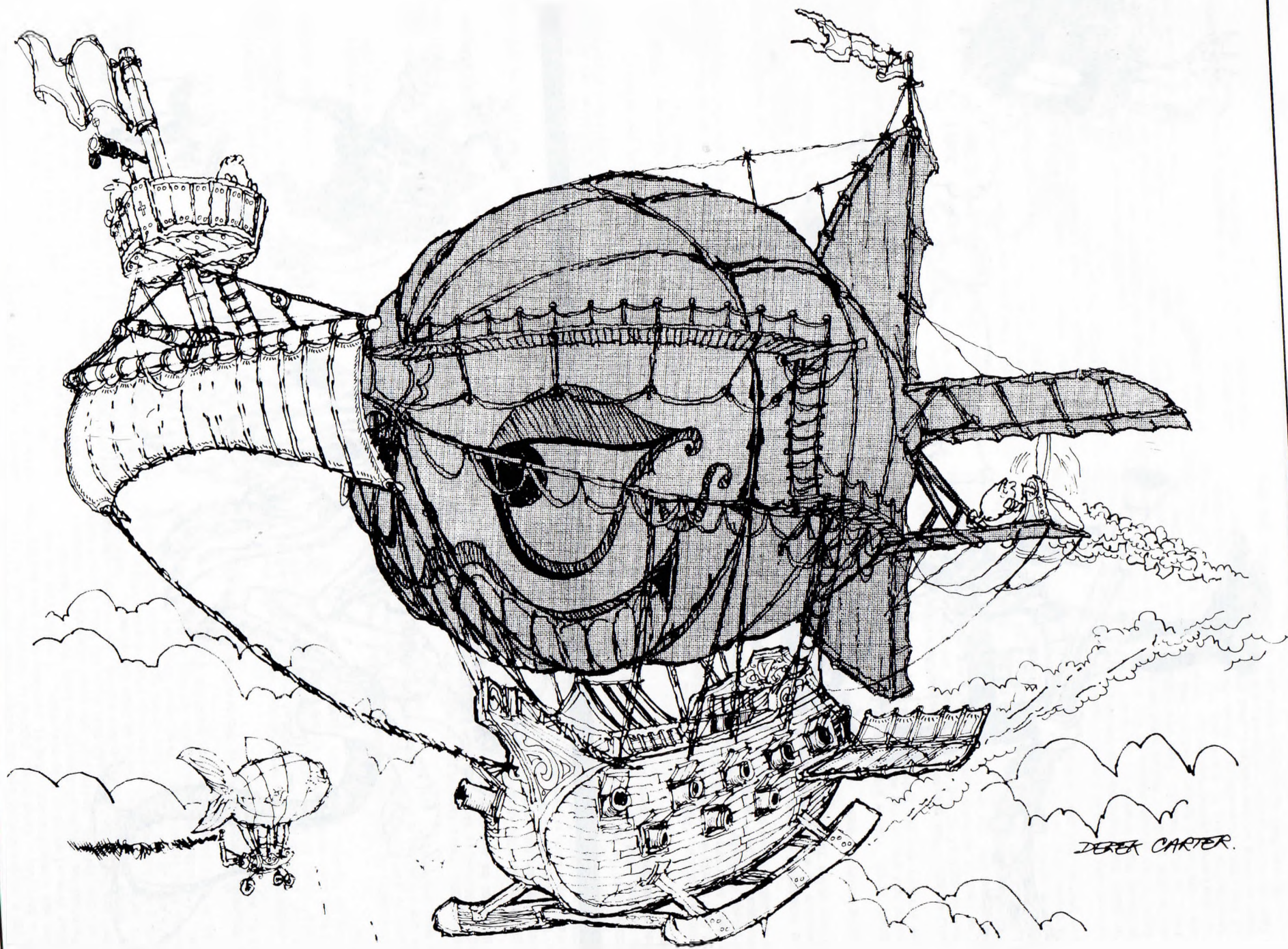
I SWEAR THAT SOMEWHERE in this strange run of days I saw a menu proclaiming a Bicentennial Breakfast. It may just have been in the restaurant-come-general store that Boy the Wonder directed us towards on this particular morning before we left Chez Bowers and the plastic gnome fishing in the front yard and yelling "Cincinnati Beware" headed towards the strangest two and a half days of at least this year, if not the past two or three, that has ever crossed my path.

For all of you who wondered about the drawing of the mounted warrior carried out in the back seat of the car, be assured that the Edich is an A-1 car nut, which means that the wild blue Torino rides as smoothly as the proverbial very young person's posterior. Ergo---no trouble in sketching, drawing, going to sleep, talking, drinking beer or eating great gobfuls of gorp. And we reached Paradise at about three in the afternoon only to find that it was fully booked. For those that were there, as you can guess by my continued presence, I solved that problem. For those that were not cheer loudly for Andrew the Porter and his offer at three the next morning without whom this report would have read differently.

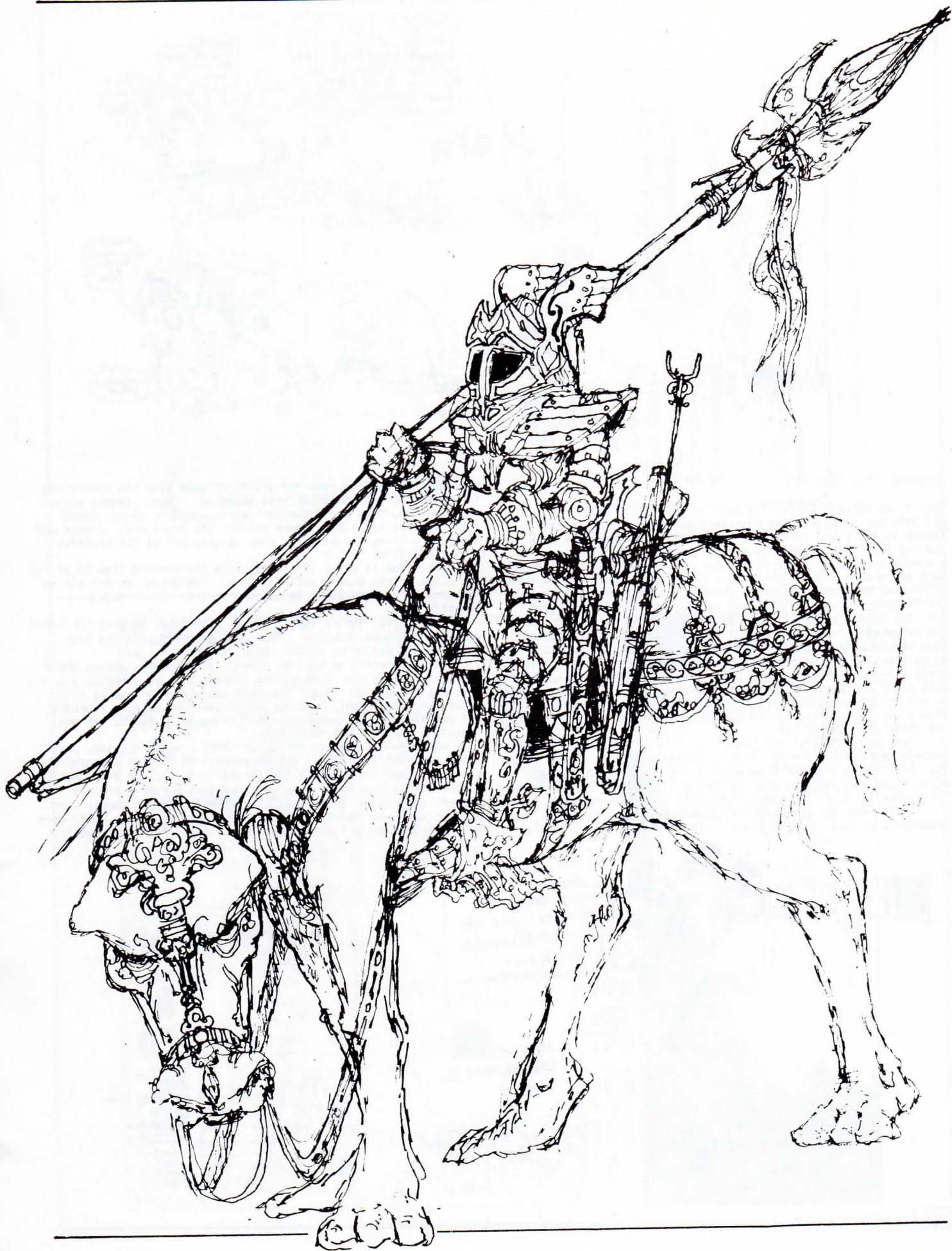
Anyway the offer of the first party came down at about five or so, we all disappeared for dinner at about seven, Bowers went off to an airport to watch planes or something at about ten, and I was gently pissed by about two thirty having met Joe and Gay and Lord knows who else, including Terry, finding out later that because of a weird gamut of facial expressions I was under observation by someone who was destined to say hello ten or so hours later. Again, at this point the diarist doth do his bounden duty. So far it was reasonably so-so which was lucky for Hairy Wonder because if it bombed out da bum wuz gonna be da moidered....

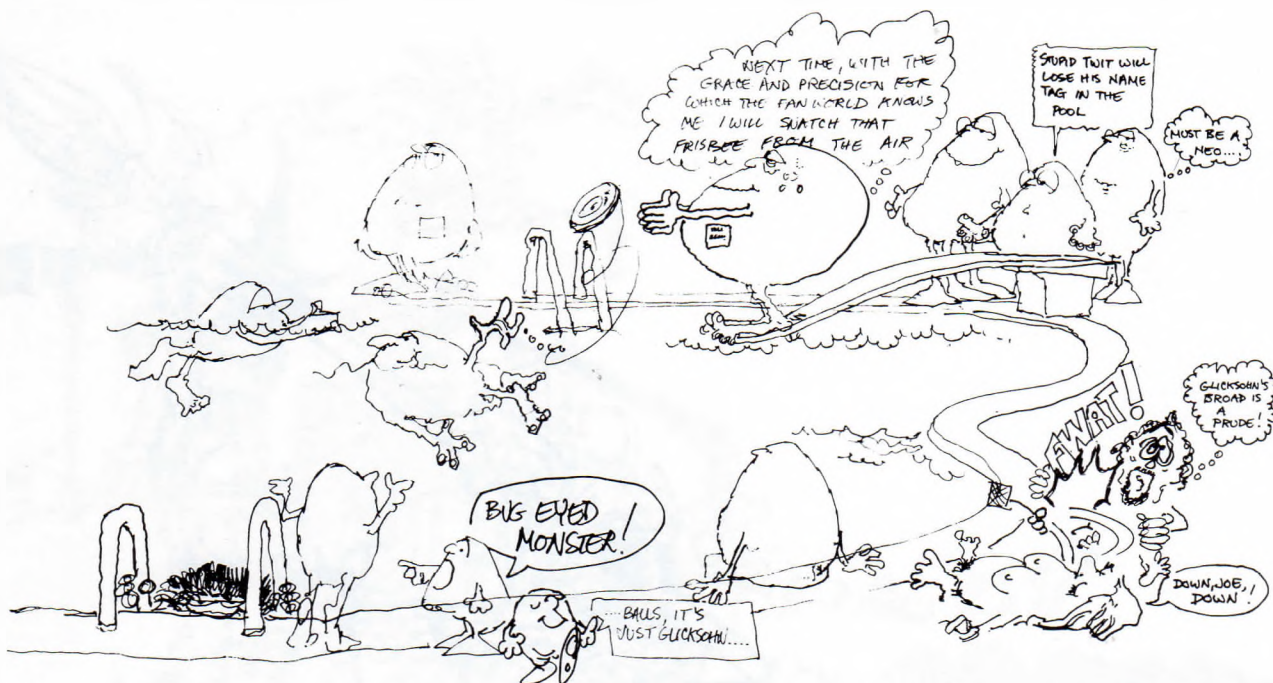






Reproduced Courtesy Doug Tardif, Toronto





Saturday, June 26th 1976

AREN'T CON REPORTS boring? I mean do you *really* enjoy reading all this gar de bage? For example there I was at about ten or eleven in the lobby looking for a breakfast partner when down came Joe and Gay. Now doesn't this make fun reading? It's great as a memory because this bloody madness of a hotel has this strange quay thing with lobster pots and a fake Pacific pond out in front which sent me winging off into the land of Long John Silver (a trifle hard for one so small but as they had carefully scaled down the other fans to fit the dissimilarity didn't seem to cause any offence) which meant that by the time we rolled or hobbled into the breakfast place, whatever it was called, we were all ho ho my hearties and shiver me timbers ecetera ecetera laying longboats alongside like seasoned salts finally sending mythical Jims left right and centre to mythical apple barrels. Then Joe treated us all to his own game show--Find The Meat. (Look, at this rate, this could take ages--nip out now for a couple of six packs before the going gets really bad.)

See, being British and normal, or Iowa City and sweet, the average breakfast order ran "Ham 'n eggs, toast and coffee". But Joe, well he's a sort of Midwestcon answer to Texas and John Wayne. And very well he does it too--a little easy on the swagger byt generally it's all there. Including his--er--breakfast tastes. "I'll have the breaded Pork tenderloin sandwich, ma'am." For breakfast; no less. Joan Blondell chewed on her gum, then dis-

appeared. After the required amount of time plus the number you first thought of, the breakfasts appeared. Chomp, chomp, sketch, chomp, chomp, give Derek another napkin, sketch, chomp, chomp (open up that first beer, dear reader, why don't you. I have and I'm only writing the stuff.), then quietly out of the breakfast blue comes this:

"This bun is dry." It sounds like the opening line of either *The Alamo* or *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*. "Waitress, ma'am, kin ah hev some mo' tartar sauce to moisten up this edible Mojave Desert?"

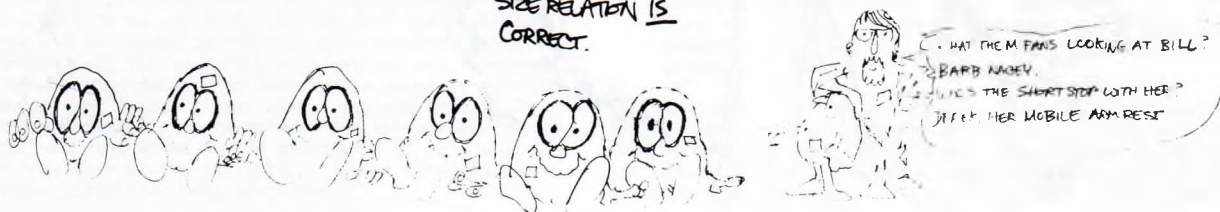
"Sho thing, Mistha Wayne, suh." Meanwhile, back at the other plates, continued chomping. The sauce appeared. So did the entire Sioux nation on yonder ridge, Major.

"I bet there's no meat in here." You know the scenes where ole Duke squints and firms up his already Rock of Gibraltar jaw. This was one of 'em. Rip. One dead sandwich. Not messy a la Peckinpah, just deadly like *The Quiet Man*. We quietly regarded the revealed flat breaded mess-er-mass on Joe's plate. He was regarding it too. But not quietly.

Gay something about "Of course there's meat in there, Joe." Thank you Maureen O'Hara. May we present Mr Rooster Cogburn? The air was ratherlike the last ten seconds prior to the final Mexican attack on you know what. And Duke had just borrowed Richard Widmark's overgrown toothpick. For myself I was no longer Long John yo-ho-ho my hearties Silver. A closer comparison would have been Shirley Temple's younger brother. About to wet his pants.



PLEASE NOTE THE SIZE RELATION IS CORRECT.

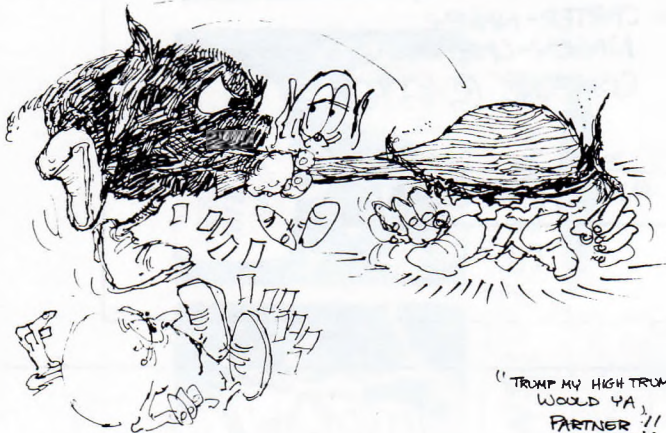




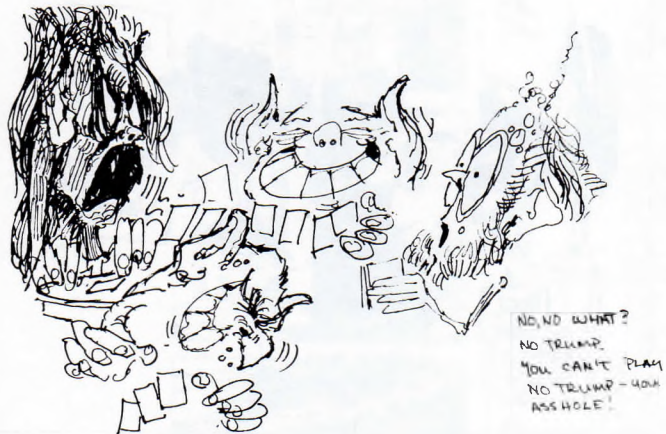
GENTLEMEN - I THINK MURBATRON'S THIRDEYE IS
WANDERING AGAIN.....



GENTLEMEN - CONSIDERING
THE CURIOUS IMBALANCE
OF MR. TROUBLE'S CARDS
I THINK WE MAY SAFELY
CALL 'MISDEAL'



"TRUMP MY HIGH TRUMP
WOULD YA
PARTNER ??!"



NO, NO WHAT?
NO TRUMP.
YOU CAN'T PLAY
NO TRUMP - YOU
ASS HOLE!



WHAT, SHIT, YOU DID IT
AGAIN! WHAT THE HELL ARE
YOU DOING? GODDAMN IT,
WHERE DO YOU THINK WE
ARE? IN PINOCHLE ??!!
AREN'T WE?..

WRENCH, DIG, YELL "MEAT, MEAT!" cries JOe. I don't blame him. The ratio must have been about two tons of batter to one ounce of maybe Pork, if that. Which just goes to prove that to get his strength up in the morning John Wayne should stick to ham 'n eggs.

All run back. It's convention time! Run into the lobby. Yell at fans. Run into the Dealer's Room. Yell at fans. Run up to pool. Ho hum, where are everybody? Shit. At this point I remember that Andrew has the only key and he isn't getting up until noon which means that I can not get my swimming gear until he appears. Wander up to the top of the pool cursing silently.

Those curses must have been the opening stanzas of some weird incantation because when I looked up there was this person, folks.

Quite how she appeared there is still a mystery. One moment I'm dreamwalking along mumbling curse, curse, curse, next moment there's a name tag carrying strange information. Never found out if she was mumbling dark spee's herself but the conversation that followed will do equally well for either party--a sort of stereo effect if you can purloin another copy of this fanzine and place it on the other side of your eyeballs.

"Hi. You're the person Glicksohn said I should meet. Nice to meet you." Shake hands, turn to look at currently non-existent hairy thing. "Gee, thanks Mike for the introduction."

Which, historians is how Derek the Carter met Barbara the Nagey and how a little red sketch book became a sort of centre of attention during the rest of the con. We must have had an effect on each other because for the next day and a half small sarcastic cartoons just kept coming. And coming. And coming. We just kept bouncing observations off one another the entire time we were to-gether.

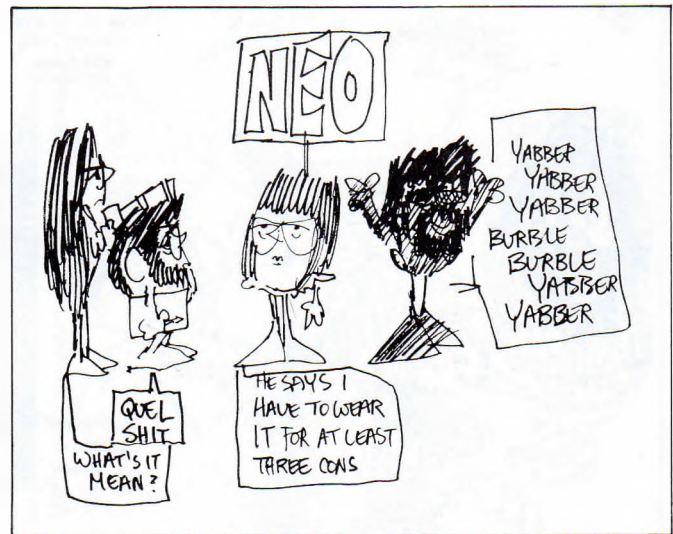
Anyway this isn't a script synopsis for *Edge of Night* (or the Midwestcon version, *Edge of Pool*): it's as you goons out there know, and apparently love, a con report. Herewith a report. We all sawm in the pool. We all drank beer. We all sat around on the grass. We all had a good time. We all were me, Barb, Joe, Gay, Bill, Terry, Mike, Stephanie, Apple Susan, Mark, Rusty, and a six pack of whatever was going. As for the other fans you'll have to wait and see their reports to see how they liked it. The Banquet (I'm told this is the thing to write about in con reports). There was food but I don't recall the speeches. The reason for this lack of recall is the non-fan act of saying "screw the speeches--let's go play bridge." So off we trooped to play bridge. Actually Barb and three others played bridge, I sat close at hand playing cartoonist (a one handed game with a pental as trumps, played one sheet at a time and if it doesn't work out rip it off the pad and deal another sheet). End of bridge game. Guess what? PARTY TIME. Two of them. In a row. A good way for 'em to be. The first involved beer and a strange selection of people who found incredible amusement in some very bad videotape mishaps. Now a good deal of time must have elapsed between the Banquet and the time at which we left gaiety bash #1 because Barb decided it was breakfast time. Down along Fisherman's Wharf again for a two o'clock breakfast. Then back for gaiety #2. This involved someone playing a guitar. And William Bowers appeared. Hello Bill. Also I dimly remember feeling very foggy as my ear was bunged up from leaping about with Joe and Gay abandon in ye olde pool that afternoon. At about three and thirty I decide it was diarist time again so wandered roomwards.

AND NOW FOR ALL YOU SMUG FAT UGLY FANS
WE GIVE YOU THE

SHITBEATERS GAZETTE

COURTESY THE CARTER-NAGEY
NAGEY-CARTER
↑
A DRUNK
FANARTIST'S
TYPO
COMBINE ©1976

A MIDWESTCON INSULT SPECIAL



I'M PUBUSHING... I HAVE MASTERS... MY FIRST
 ISH OUT SOON ... PURPLE, GREEN & RED THINGS..... 2016 or
 1616 stork, boxed.... OUT OF NEW YORK..... CAN YOU STENCIL"
 (AT THIS POINT CARTER COULD NOT WRITE ALL THE "FAN
 PUB INFO" SHIT FAST ENOUGH!)



WHAT THEY DON'T HAVE A
 COLOR T.V. IN HERE?
 WHAT IS THIS?
 YEA, WHAT IS THIS ANYWAY?
 WHERE'S THE BEER?
 WHAT DID YOU SAY?
 WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
 YOU SAY WHAT?
 WHO IS THAT CHICK?
 YOU ALL DON'T HAVE A
 COLOR T.V. IN HERE?



HEY TAY N LUVLY GEE
 CAN'T BEAT THE SHIT
 OUT OF BOWERS -HE'S
 GOING PRO.
 LIKE HELL SHORT STOP...
 WE'LL CATCH THE
 BASTARD NEXT TIME
 AROUND



OH....
 BODYGUARD!
 WHERE
 ARE
 YOU..... ???



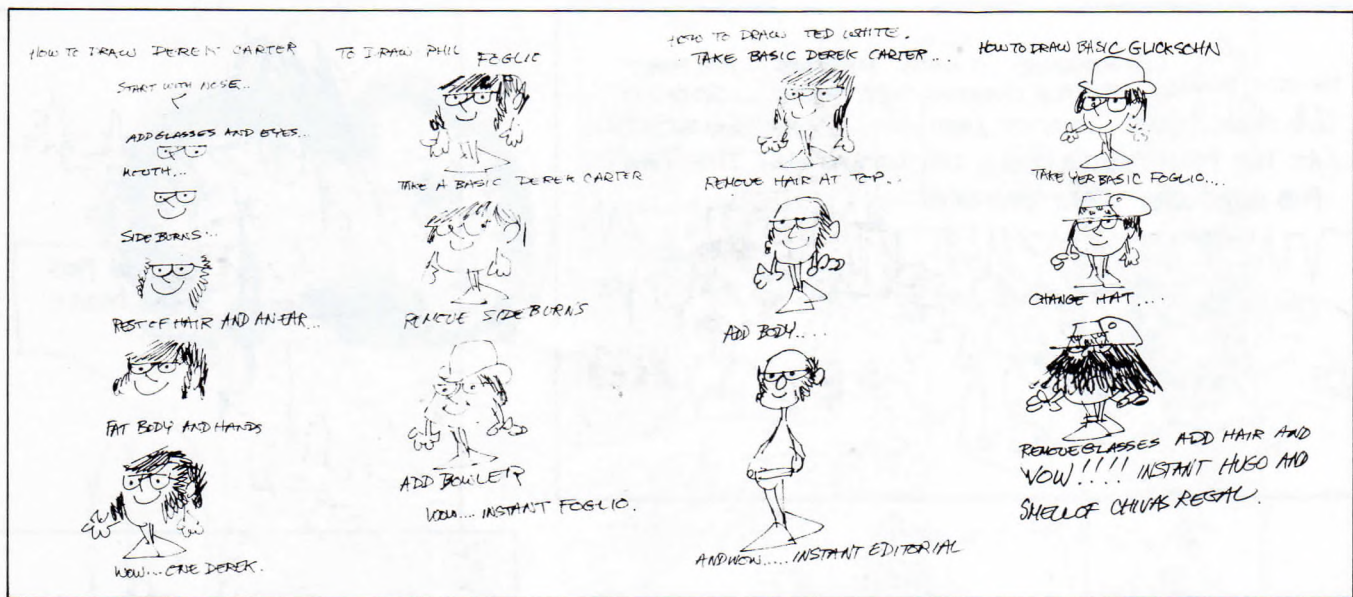
HAVE I REALLY
 ONLY KNOWN HER
 FOR A DAY AND
 A HALF?



SHIT! SHE LEAVES
 HE GETS MORE
 VISCIOUS.....

WELL I CAN'T HELP
 IT IF OUR PLAN WENT
 AWRY.....

WELL YOU'RE
 ACRIGHT - YOU'RE
 GOING PRO BUT
 THEY'RE AFTER
 MY HUGO.



Sunday, June 27 1976

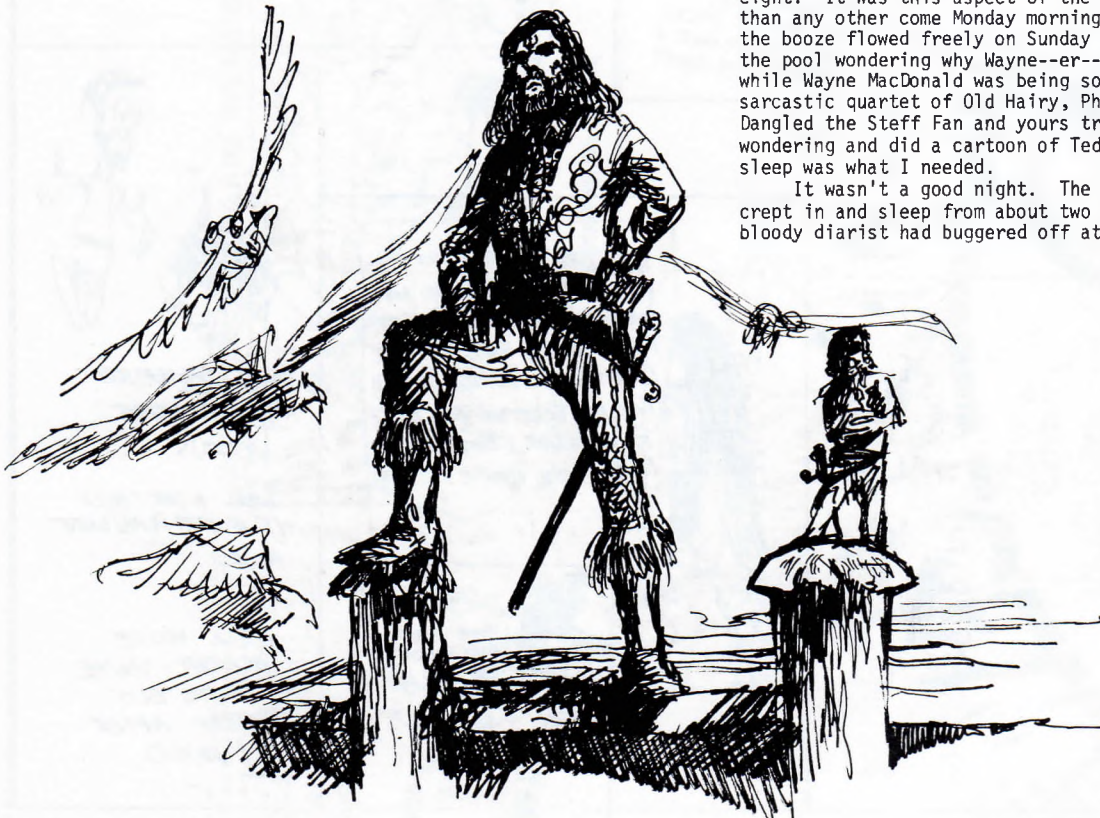
THE REASON I really came out of seclusion to go to Midwestcon was to scratch Gay's back and have breakfast with her two successive mornings. And tell me, can you think of a better reason than that? And we were sneaky too because on Sunday morning we hit la place du breakfast before anyone else and had the pleasure of seeing pince nezed Daughters of the Revolution hit managers over the head with complaints about slow service. Things jist aint bin the same since George passed on. Yes folks America *is* fun--in a sick sort of way. After repasting regally and regaling each other with tales of life love and high adventure, we left meeting a grand horde of ravenous fans all lined up waiting to get in. Gay went sweetly over and said "THE SERVICE IN THIS PLACE IS SHIT", thereby depriving it of about three hundred dollars in meals and thirty cents in tips.

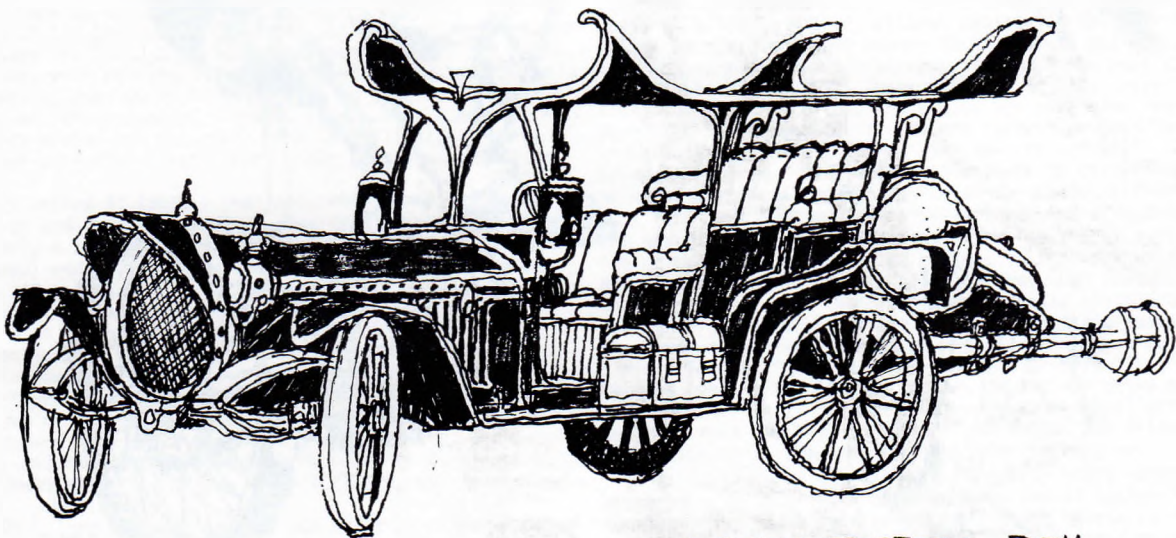
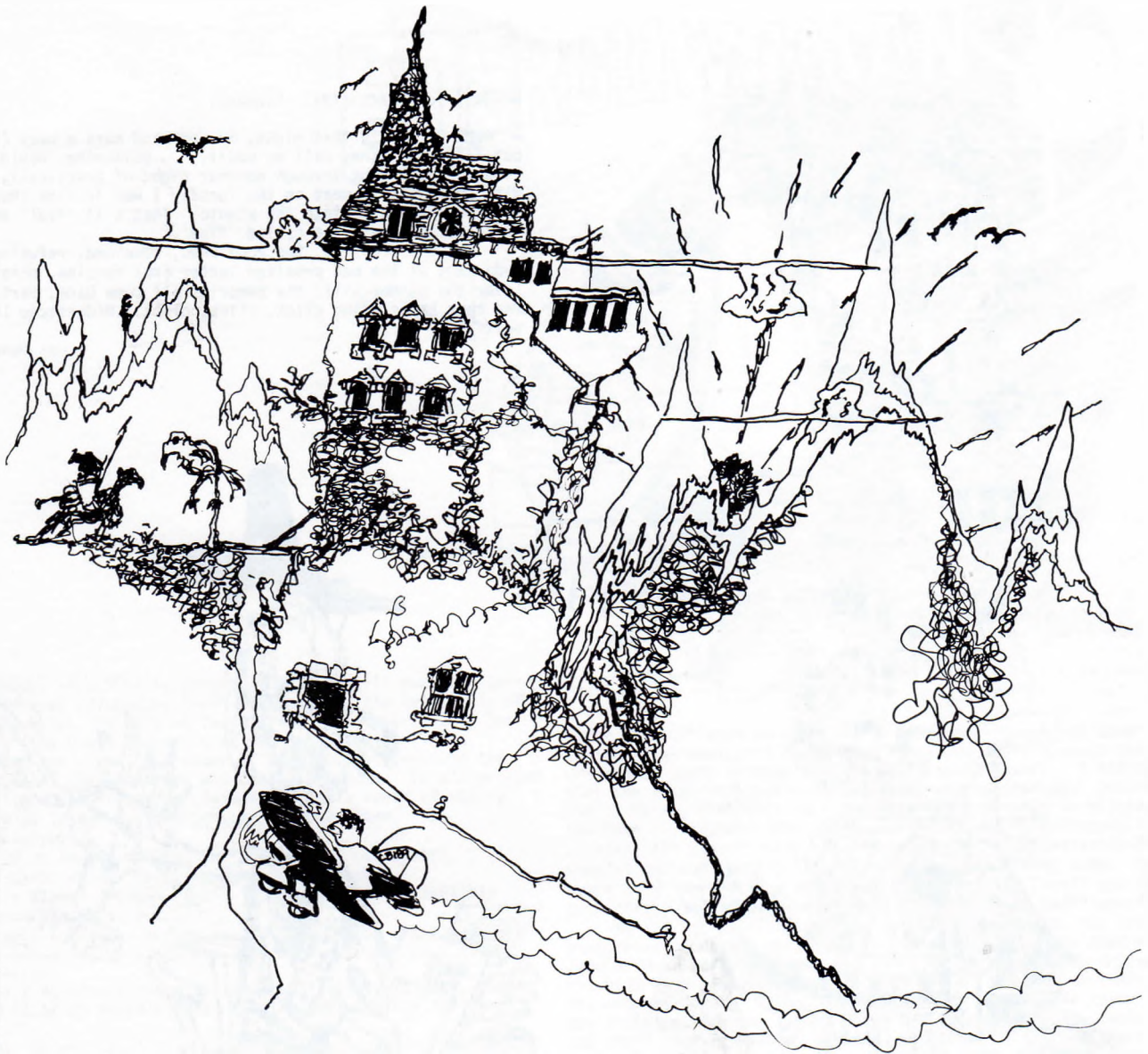
Back to the hotel. Shall I tell you about the Dealer's Room. O.k., it was full of books, of which I bought one, and Rusty Hevelin sat in a corner deep in a shadow, or was that his

T shirt? Meanwhile the great to be with crowd were once more holding court around the pool. Where yours truly the proceeded to hang on a beeeeyuuutifull sunburn. Lo the British lobster comes. All puffy and blisters. Mark must have either been a receptive soul or was angling for a cover because beers to deaden the pain kept appearing at hand grabbing level with frightening regularity. Gay meanwhile was in her element playing den mother yelling out at five minute intervals "PASS THE COPPERTONE WE HAVE TO ROAST THE OTHER SIDE", dolloping the stuff all over my horror movie body. It was a good try Gay, me old love. But I still burnt and blistered.

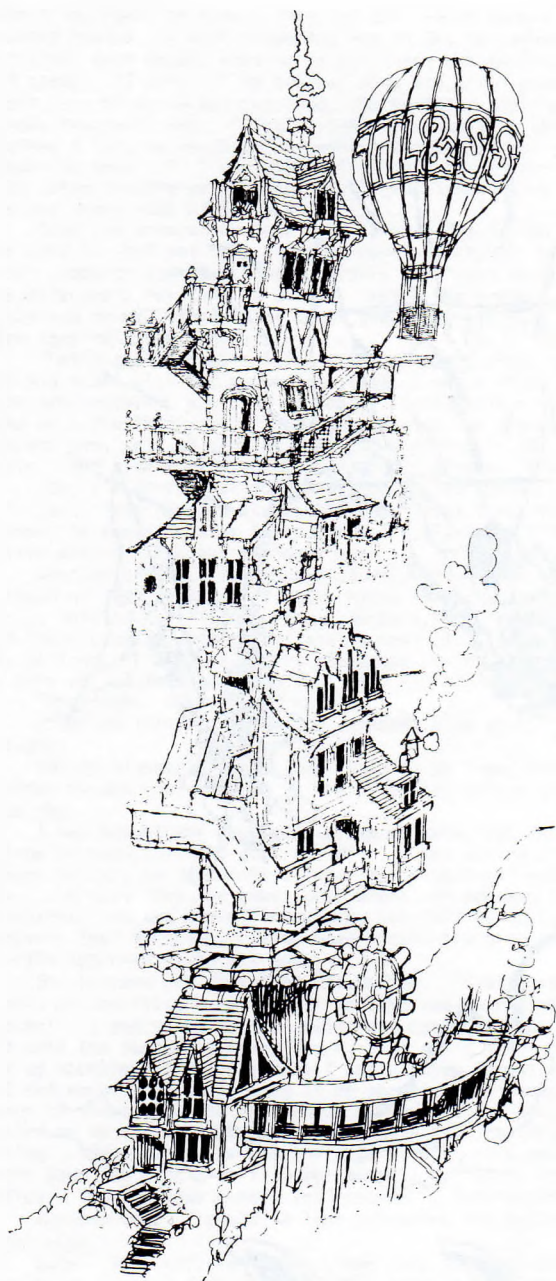
But it was a funny day for at three that afternoon some of the mob left and left us feeling a little vague. I mean, we weren't coherent at the best of times, this parting of the ways just seemed to enhance things. The con was beginning to break up. In the evening things lifted briefly as we all went nuts at some place for dinner, then it was oops down we go (the message really came home for me this time) again as another yelling screaming mob, now known as the Iowa Guerillas, left at about eight. It was this aspect of the con that had me wondering more than any other come Monday morning. But, somewhat like a wake, the booze flowed freely on Sunday evening as we all sat around the pool wondering why Wayne--er--sorry there old chap Tarrya-while Wayne MacDonald was being so serious alongside the sarcastic quartet of Old Hairy, Phil the instant portPholigo, Dangled the Steff Fan and yours truly, da Shortstop. I gave up wondering and did a cartoon of Ted Tide White before realising sleep was what I needed.

It wasn't a good night. The sunburn and other things had crept in and sleep from about two thirty was impossible...the bloody diarist had bugged off at last...





THE GRAND TORPEDO FROM
"THE RETURN OF
REMBRAND VAN SHPLITZ"



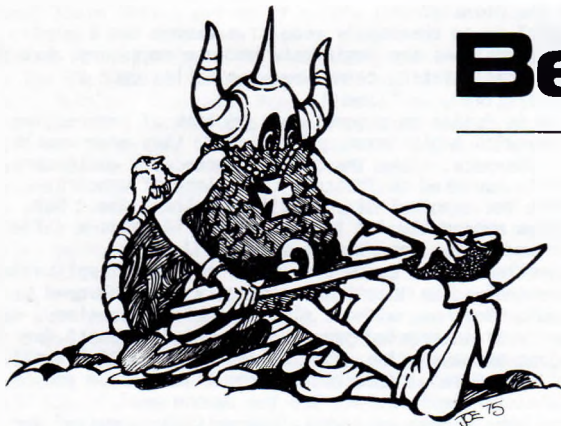
Monday, June 28th 1976. Evening.

AT HOME BY ELEVEN that night, my arms and ears a mess (I found out later that they call my oddity sun poisoning, would you believe?) and I went through another night of practically no sleep With deadlines to meet on the Tuesday I was in fine shape when it came time to go into the studio. That's if 'foul' and 'rotten' could ever be called 'fine'.

But the memories, the good ones, remained, refusing to budge and as the odd promised letter (not fanzine, note) comes 'over the window sill' the memories all come back, particularly one that keeps going click, click, click...Midwestcon 1976... sniff...

--- Derek Carter





Beer Mutterings

POUL ANDERSON

LIKE ANY OTHER WORKMAN, a writer is concerned about the quality of his materials. You can't do a good job with shoddy stuff. At best, you have to add awkward reinforcements at strain points or use dodges that should not be necessary and that make the end product less pleasing and useful that it deserves to be. Some things become impossible to create because the required components are no longer there.

Thus I view the deterioration of the English language (a result of the general decay of education) with even more alarm than behooves me as a citizen. It strikes at my livelihood that the stock upon which I draw is of steadily dwindling worth and variety.

One reason, besides genius, why Shakespeare and his contemporaries were great, is that in those days English was at its height, never before or since so rich and powerful. You can confirm this for yourself by going back not just to the famous works, but to the writings of people with no literary pretensions--Sir Francis Drake, for example, whose dispatches hold the swing and crash of the sea itself.

Even then, nuances were going out of the tongue, notably the intimate pronoun "thou", which Shakespeare for the most part restricts to the tragedies. For a while the use of first names was a rough equivalent, but no longer in America, where the oafish practice of first-naming everybody in sight has become well-nigh universal.

Continental languages preserve the distinction, and I admit having been in a slightly embarrassing situation because of that. This was about twenty-five years ago, when I was visiting Denmark for the first time since World War Two. I happen to know Danish, and was speaking it with a distant relative. After being long out of touch, though, and much younger than him, I wasn't sure how he expected to be addressed. Would "you" (*De*) seem too standoffish, or "thou" (*du*) too pushy? Luckily, the impersonal pronoun "one" (*man*), which in modern English tends to sound affected, remains colloquial over there. Hence for half an hour of conversation, I made do with that, never once employing the second person. If you think this is nothing to boast of, try it.

Well, we can't amend the past. For centuries, "thou" in English has only been suitable when one (ah, ha!) is being deliberately anachronistic. In such cases, I wish writers would get the grammar straight. The verb form to go with "thou" is not "are, do, say," etc., but "art, dost, sayest...." And "thee" is the objective case, except maybe among Quakers. And "you" is the familiar second person plural, though "ye" is an allowable alternative.

Inevitably, words change their meanings through time. If anything, the surprise lies in how many stay constant for hundreds of years--especially vulgarisms. See, again, Shakespeare. Yet they too are not eternal. Dr. Sam: Johnson would no doubt be quite shocked if he could visit the present era and hear Air Force officers, supposed to be gentlemen, saying, "Roger" all over the place. In this instance, obviously there was a discontinuity, the vocable being revived by chance.

What is vulgar seems to depend more often on where you are in space than in time. Americans are amused to hear British laborers refer to getting their screw, and, if male, grow hopeful with a hope doomed to disappointment when young British ladies ask to be knocked up in the morning. On the other hand, the American folk song, *Hallelujah, I'm a Bum* had to have that last word changed to "Tramp" for singing in the U.K.

I like to quote Eddington's remark that the universe is not only stranger than we know, it is stranger than we can imagine. But to avoid unwanted grins, I must change the adjective, which for him was "queerer." Likewise, in fantasy I have to make a point of spelling "faerie."

I sympathize with the desire of homosexuals for a short, euphonious term without derogatory connotations to denominate themselves. But how I wish they had not settled on "gay". It was a fine old word with a very special meaning, now forever denied us. Why not a completely new sound instead? In fact, ideally that's what we should always do, not distort what we have but keep it intact and simply add to it.

Alas, outside of science, and not invariably within it (e.g., think how confusingly many ideas are covered by "polarization"), that is not how language mostly evolves. Jane Austen objected to the shift in the value of "nice" which occurred in her lifetime, from "precise" to "pleasant". However, if you look up the history of that particular word, you will find that this is long and complicated; originally it meant either "foolish" or "wanton". In the past generation or two, indiscriminate application has made it little more than a polite noise.

And so things go. I may regret the fact, but reality is full of regrettable facts against which it is pointless to rail.

What we can fight is avoidable degeneration. And thus we come to my protest.

I'll begin with neologisms that are bad because poorly formed or unnecessary. We do require a steady supply of fresh terms these days, but they should be constructed right. As an example of inutility, do you remember science fiction's "astrogator"? Fortunately, it has dropped into well-deserved oblivion. (Do airplanes have "aerogators"?). In this connection, we must admit that the Russian "cosmonaut" makes better etymological sense than our "astronaut". The difference doesn't quite seem worth making a fuss over. But what about the practice in NASA--in big organizations generally--of saying, "At this point in time" instead of plain "Now"? Babuisms of that kind are multiplying like streptococci, perhaps most of all in the educational establishment. A book could be written on the subject of this single paragraph. It would make pretty depressing reading.

Like any fanatics who infest a basically worthy cause, the ultra-feminists are damaging theirs, not least by the ugliness of their gibberish. I don't object strongly to "Ms.", which indeed sometimes helps me sidestep a slightly ticklish uncertainty, as "*man*" did in Denmark. Yet be it noted that "Miss" could formerly be applied to any woman whose marital status was not specified, and commonly was when she was being addressed in a professional capacity. I do refuse to say, "He or she" whenever either sex can be meant. It's hideously clumsy; besides, in English, "he" has always been both the masculine and the indefinite pronoun, depending on context. I am reminded of the militant who screamed that "history" is a typical sexist word which totally ignores "herstory".

For the same reason, I will have no part of current attempts to introduce an artificial indefinite. ("Ter", isn't it, or something equally silly?) And "man" means "human beings" as well as "adult human male". It means a lot of other things too, including "worker". My wife, who used to be in the Army Map Service, will fight anybody who says she was a draftsperson. "Chairperson", "Congressperson", and the like are still more ludicrous, culminating, God help us, at a certain college where they now teach "freshperson English". I can imagine the textbook for that course, but would rather not. No doubt before long the radical liberationists are going to want to be known as perdaughters.

Meanwhile, let's consider the decline of grammar. Admittedly, traditional English grammar fastened a Latin straightjacket on a structurally Teutonic language. There is no sound reason--in English--not to split an occasional infinitive or end an occasional sentence with a preposition. Nevertheless, the significant rules exist for the purpose of enabling us to put together intelligible sentences. Quintilian said, "Write not so that you will be understood, but so that you cannot help but be understood." This is hardly possible unless you and the reader share both a vocabulary and a set of operating principles for it. True, the rules should be servants, not masters. There are times when you must lay them off and go about the job in your own way. But no wise householder will interfere with his staff very often, or ever without considerable forethought. He knows that they

have been at their business longer than he has.

Some latter-day barbarisms are, probably, merely offensive. In my youth, the answer to the question, "When do you say 'different from' and when do you say 'different than'?" was, "You say 'different than' when you are making a mistake." The modern student would, by and large, reply, "Huh?" or, likelier, "Duh." Another grace is gone.

Similarly, most languages get along without a distinction between "like" and "as". However, already years ago Ogden Nash foresaw such horrid possibilities as "Like You Like It"--hh, no, this comes out "like 'Like You Like It.'" You see, if nothing else, these fine points add a variety of sounds to English; they make it more pleasing. Surely that is among the things a writer tries to do, give pleasure.

If they must express themselves, the half-educated are safer imitating the peasantry than trying to be literate. Thus, "octopuses" is an acceptable plural, though "octopodes" is better, but "octopi" merely betrays ignorance. In allegedly learned contemporary publications, we see "media" and "data" employed as singular nouns. If it was just too much trouble to find the proper forms in any dictionary, couldn't the perpetrators at least have had the decency to write "mediums" and

"datums" as the plurals?

"Cladding" is an absolutely repulsive excuse for a word. Certain back formations are legitimate because necessary, but in this case, several existing terms were available, such as "covering", "plating", or "armor".

Maybe it is futile to suggest that victims of progressive education stay with Anglo-Saxon. Even in it, they seem unable to maintain coherence. Take the common sentence "I could care less." This is supposed to indicate total lack of concern, which was what the original "I couldn't care less" did. But people nowadays apparently don't realize that it makes a difference whether or not you insert a negative.

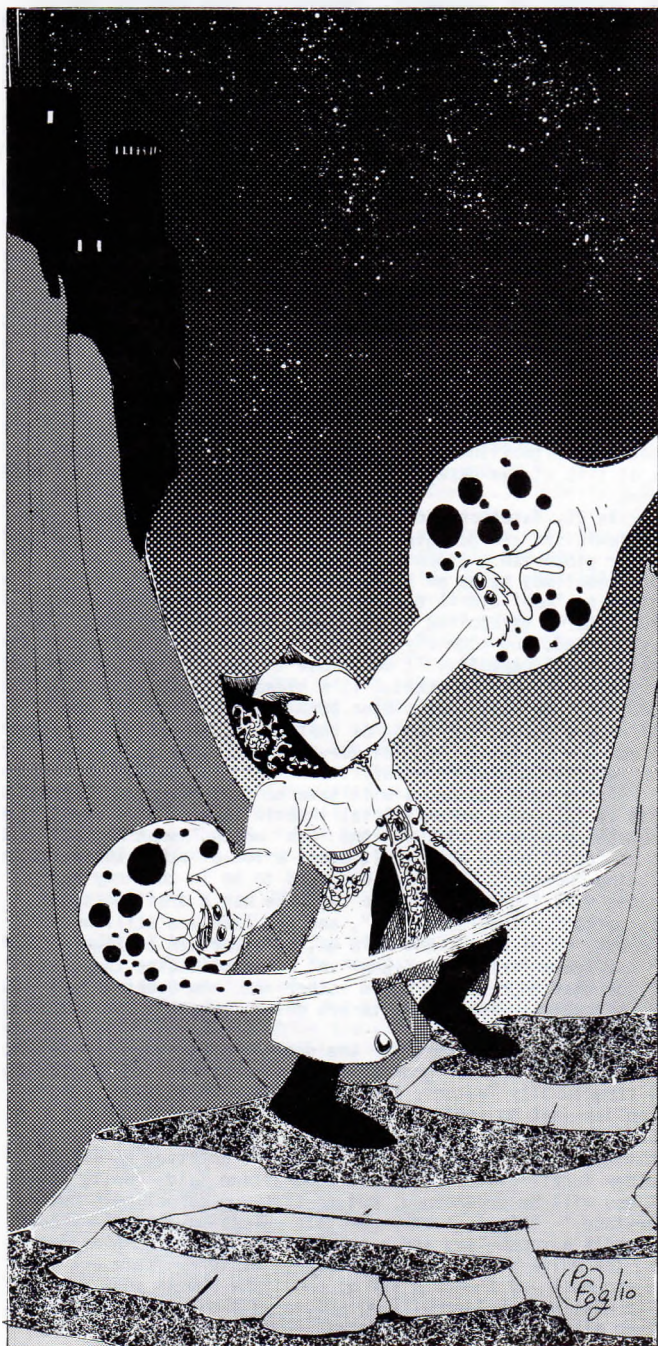
I am appalled at the cancerous spread of the misapplication of "disinterested". The intent was perfectly well conveyed by "uninterested". Now how, without elaborate circumlocutions, can I write about a disinterested judge? The use of "flaunt" for "flout" is just as nauseating, just as disastrous. "Relevant", "chauvinist", "fascist", "democratic"--the tale goes on and on, often with sinister implications for the common weal.

More and more words--yes, whole concepts--drop out of our heritage as the educationists continue their Gadarene progress. (Okay, 'fess up, how many of you instantly saw what that means?) And thus the stock with which the writer works is steadily diminished, to his loss and to his readers'.

Naturally, writers are not the sole class threatened. We all are. Humans think with symbols. A decay of symbolism means a decay in the quality and range of thought itself. Free institutions won't work for a population of yahoos. In an age as full of menaces as ours is, quite likely civilization won't.

I have no ready remedies. Too many contemporary teachers, perhaps a majority, lack the bare minimum of education, and the establishment that trains them is evidently locked into a process of discarding more culture every year. Perhaps you can raise a little hell with your local school board. Perhaps you can instill some elementary knowledge into your kids at home. Or--well, ignorance is a disease both preventable and curable. I can imagine dedicated people here and there setting up night schools; and, since the average working man is much brighter than a faculty member of the average teachers' college, I can imagine them becoming increasingly well attended. Is this an implausible scenario? Of course.

In all events, let those few of us who still care about the language keep it in a healthy state among ourselves: if nothing else, for our own delight. Then, when the barbarians enter, they may be more eager to learn than our fellow citizens were. That's happened before in the world.



THE SENATE VERSION of the copyright law revision bill (S. 22) has passed that chamber and is now in committee in the House, whose own H. R. 2223 on the same subject has apparently been set aside. Mostly it is an excellent measure which passes many reforms long overdue.

However, it does contain the so-called Mathias amendment, which would give public television what amounts to a right of eminent domain over all copyrighted material--no, worse, because a condemnation under eminent domain can be appealed in the courts. Under this monstrosity, public television can appropriate for its own use anything it wants, adapt this in any way it sees fit, and pay the proprietor whatever it chooses.

Moreover, there is no guarantee that the House won't wipe out those provisions of the Senate bill which define fair use, control photocopying, and set the period of a copyright as the life of its owner plus fifty years: all vitally important. Congress has been under heavy pressure from the educationist and library lobbies to give "nonprofit" institutions what would amount to free access to everything. Only a concerted effort by writers and publishers, for once allied, headed off this attempt to legalize piracy. Reports are that the lobbies plan to use all their considerable influence in the house to get copyright diluted to nothing where their constituencies are concerned.

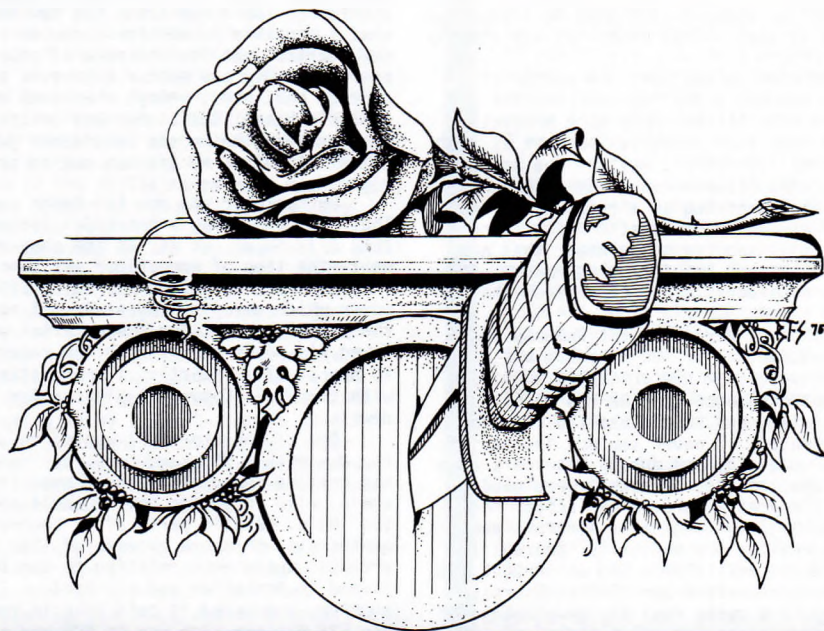
If you are concerned about the future of the creative arts in America--if you feel that creators have a right to control over their material and to just compensation for the use thereof --or if you simply want to do a big favor for any author, artist, or composer whose work you've enjoyed--then write to your Congressman. Urge strongly that the fair use, photocopying, and period provisions be retained as presently written, and that the Mathias amendment be struck out.

It would help a lot if you would also write at least to the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties, and the Administration of Justice, which currently has S. 22 under study; that's Peter W. Rodino, Jr. But please act *now*. The hour is very late.

--- Poul Anderson

Understandings

ROBERT A.W. LOWNDES



THE HEALTH-KNOWLEDGE YEARS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1960. It started off like any other Friday at Columbia Publications, Inc. I had known for some months that trouble was in the offing, since the distributors were going to throw us out at the end of the month. Noon came, I picked up my pay check and went out to lunch. Around 4 PM, publisher Louis H. Silberkleit came into my office, told me that the threatened ouster had taken place, handed me a check for two week's salary and urged me to go to the Unemployment Office first thing on Monday morning. He hoped he could find another distributor for the pulp line; if he could, he'd certainly want me back--would I please keep in touch and refrain from a full-time commitment for a couple of weeks?

I had worked as editorial director of the Columbia pulps (which translates to personally editing all except the love-romance titles) from April 1942 to the date listed above. Silberkleit called me several times, and we had a long discussion of the possibilities on one occasion. He had not been able to get another distributor, for the entire chain, but he might be able to work out an arrangement whereby I would be the publisher of *Future Science Fiction*. Details such as who would distribute it, and what I would live on until it got going again (if it did) were vague enough to make me feel they didn't exist at all.

Meanwhile, I'd been moonlighting since 1956, editing the Avalon science fiction series for Thomas Bouregy, and not long before the blow landed I'd agreed to do one Western a month for him, too. There were other possibilities for freelance editing--mainly Ace publications, and Don Wollheim (then editorial director at Ace) encouraged me to try a science fiction novel for him. Now I really had time to write. And Tom Bouregy, remembering that while my novel with Jim Blish, *THE DUPLICATED MAN*, had not broken any sales records it had done as well as various other titles from better known names, OK'd my idea to blow up *A Matter of Faith* into a full length novel. I'd done a 25-30 page catechism (a series of questions and answers about my "believers' worlds"¹ covering every angle that I could think of; some of the technical details paid off better than I expected) and had already done several chapters. And on the side I was writing detective

stories, trying to hit *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* and *Alfred Hitchcock's*. I didn't, though my contact at the Scott Meredith agency told me that a couple had come close. (Two did sell to the cheaper markets after a long while; I suspect that W.W. Scott bought them mostly out of auld lang syne feelings; he'd been the editor of the roto true detective titles at Columbia when I started to work there.)

Meanwhile, I'd tried to be honest in my weekly reports at the Unemployment agency and found that I was being, in effect, penalized for doing work which would bring in something, although hardly cover my needs. The definition of "work" was so slippery that it took months for me to realize how I could "work" and still qualify. I must not spread out my editing, for which I'd be paid, out over a full week (which I was doing so that I could also write stories to send in to Scott Meredith) because then I'd have to report that I'd worked five days--no check. Writing on speculation, it was finally agreed, did not constitute work, as there was no firm assurance that I'd ever be paid. Writing on contract for a book had to be reported as work; that was sensible.

Around the end of 1959, I'd noticed two magazines on the newsstands, which proved to be new titles: *Exploring the Unknown*, obviously a competitor to *Fate* magazine, and *Real Life Guide*, obviously a competitor to Hugo Gernsback's *Sexology*. I looked through them; both were poorly laid out and the material didn't look interesting enough to bother with. Now autumn 1960 was wearing along and no prospect of a job could be seen on the horizon. It had become painfully evident that freelance editing and writing short stories that didn't sell wasn't going to keep me going. I write slowly at best, and not getting a pay check every week was a constant nervous strain. Fortunately my wife was working. But at the end of the year, my stepson was due to enter St. Lawrence. Up to now, the financial plans had worked very well; my jobs paid household and general living expenses; Dorothy's job built up the account for Pete's tuition, etc. A 9-5 job was really needed.

Don Wollheim, who had introduced me to Tom Bouregy when the Avalon science fiction series came up (showing that he'd forgiven me my role in the FSNY in 1945) not only accepted *THE PUZZLE PLANET* but made a crucially-important suggestion--something which never would have occurred to me: advertise in *Editor and Publisher*; describe yourself as an editor-writer.

¹ The title was supposed to be BELIEVERS' WORLDS (plural); Bouregy changed it to BELIEVER'S WORLD (singular) which doesn't make sense when you read the story.

I did, and two replies came back. One was from a book publisher, who wanted an art director; when I saw what he wanted, I realized that, despite my experience at handling layouts and covers at Columbia, I simply could not qualify. The other was from a magazine publisher, Louis C. Elson; when I called on him, I found that he wanted an editor for *Real Life Guide* and a managing editor for *Exploring the Unknown* (I'd just do production work and proofreading on the latter). That interview was shortly after Columbus Day, 1960.

He called me in a second time to say that the editor of *Exploring the Unknown* and he had had a falling out, and the job would now consist of handling both titles; they were presently bi-monthly, but he wanted to make them monthlies as soon as that was realistic from the editorial viewpoint; neither one had a large inventory of material. Mr. Elson rarely made fast decisions (which worked one way when a hiring or a raise was being concerned, but quite another way when the question of killing a title came up) so it wasn't until the end of November that he called me to ask if I'd like to start the following Monday, December 5th. I would--at a considerable reduction from what I'd been making at Columbia.

So there I was, full editor of *Exploring the Unknown* and Managing Editor of *Real Life Guide*. A Dr. John Watson was listed as the latter's editor. I never saw him or talked to him on the telephone. Mr. Elson mentioned once that he did really exist; he was a retired physician, and he checked the mss. for the book before they were accepted. I never saw any indication that he disapproved of anything I did; and during the years when RLG was alive, no more than six articles I thought were good enough to use were vetoed. (I'm pretty sure it was Elson, not Watson.) Not a good arrangement; I was medically ignorant and have since learned enough to realize how medically ignorant I really am. Yet, the title lasted until 1967; had we brought out one more issue, it could have been called our 10th anniversary one. Neither I nor Posterity, I'm sure, feel any great sense of loss.

Exploring the Unknown was an entirely different proposition. It was astonishing how much of the material was familiar to me, until I thought of my years of reading *Weird Tales*. That was an asset; what was, perhaps, less so was my current religious convictions; I was then an Anglican Catholic--that is, preferring the "high" branch of the Protestant Episcopal Church. I leaned very heavily on the Church's view of psychic phenomena, communications from the "spirit" world, astrology, numerology, etc. In addition, I was more inclined to take a sort of Campbellian approach to psychic phenomena; thus, at the start, I was more inclined to rely upon parapsychologists than Mediums. That view would be reversed in time; that fraud and delusions exist among mediums is entirely true--and in England no one is more interested in exposing the phony medium than the Spiritualists themselves--but it is something genuine that the phonies are faking.

Toward the end of 1960, I told Mr. Elson that we could now go ahead and make the two titles monthlies. He'd had second thoughts on EXTU, however; later reports indicated that it was doing well enough to continue, but not to increase frequency of publication. However, we'd go ahead with RLG and I got a \$10 raise the following Friday.

We were being printed by Holyoke Magazine Press, the same people who'd handled the Columbia pulps, so it was a real reunion. The foreman of the plant, Don Hundley, told me that it had always been a pleasure to work with me--material arrived with everything in place, directions clear when something was yet to come, etc.

The experiment with monthly publication was a disaster. Newsstands would get the December issue a week before the November one, or not get one of the two at all. We finally went back to bi-monthly publication, and Mr. Elson started looking for another printer. (Holyoke was pleasant to work with, but their finished product wasn't very good; perhaps the best you could get at a low price, though.)

So, for several years, things went along; I considered myself out of science fiction and fantasy fiction editing--of course, I was still handling the Avalon books (I'd resigned in 1958, but after four months, was implored to come back, so I did--one of the more sensible important decisions I've made in a generally misspent life) but I still only think of a science fiction editor as a *magazine* editor.

Then, in 1963, Mr. Elson asked me what I thought of the possibilities of bringing out a horror magazine. My question was: "What kind of horror?" If it was the old *Terror Tales*, *Horror Stories* type of story in which all the weirdness is phoney and torture and mutilation are the core, I doubted that it would go over. (And I couldn't edit it with enthusiasm.) He revealed that a couple of Great Pan "Horror" anthologies had done very well here. Upon reading the first one, I was relieved to find it an very fine collection of truly weird classics.

Now my own personal collection of *Weird Tales*, from July 1925 to the end in 1954 (with a few earlier 1925 copies) would have more than just collector's value; and there were some science fiction tales from the Gernsback titles which could be used. We'd have some of the classic names but avoid reprinting their best known tales, where I had no doubt about those being readily available. We'd run about 50% new material, all depending upon what I was able to obtain--I wouldn't run what I considered poor new stories just for the sake of publishing new material. (Of course, hardly any editor ever runs a story he or she considers poor or bad, etc., except when such mss. are accepted over the editor's head. But almost any editor has, at times, accepted stories which he or she considered just barely "all right", with editorial help. My aim was not to accept "just barely all right" new stories at all.)

Our printer was now the Rosen company in Buffalo, New York. They had been doing a beautiful job on *Exploring the Unknown* and *Real Life Guide*, so far as the appearance of the finished product went--the time of appearance was something else.

My starting budget was to be \$250. No art, and a dignified cover which gave the appearance of an anthology. That meant, then, that payment for new material would be 1¢ a word; and I vowed I'd never pay as much for reprints--where it was necessary to pay at all. Shortly, I would start a regular correspondence with the U. S. Copyright office, for searches of copyright renewals.

One of the stories I wanted to use in the first issue was *The Man with a Thousand Legs*, by Frank Belknap Long. That story had chilled and re-chilled me over the years. But reading it again, with an eye to how it would appear to general readers of the '60's, certain parts of it seemed somewhat quaint--not the quaintness which one expects of 19th century tales, but a sort of artistic quaintness relating to the 20's. Fortunately, Frank was living in Manhattan and available. I called him up, told him my problem, and asked if he'd like to rework the story a bit. We'd pay \$25 for one-time use in MOH and a one-time anthology option: that is, should Health Knowledge, Inc., decide to issue an anthology of material from MOH at some later time, we could use the story without further payment. That did not impair the author's right to re-sell the story anywhere once the issue of MOH containing it went off sale. That was my deal with all authors for new material; and, in a sense, this story would be new. (For reprints without updating, our fee covered one-time use in MOH only. Eventually, I had a rubber stamp made so that there could be no doubt as to what the author or his agent had agreed to.)

Since leaving Columbia Publications, I was pretty much out of touch with science fiction authors, except for a few living in or around the city. Edward D. Hoch had been contributing to *Exploring the Unknown*, so he got an invitation to try for appearance in volume one number one--something a number of writers enjoy doing. Wallace West (who still included me on his expense-account lunch circuit at the expense of the Oil Industry), Robert Silverberg, and Don Wollheim responded with enjoyable stories. Wally's was a reject from Farnsworth Wright but, as I told authors repeatedly, I don't care how often a story has been rejected or for what reason (aside from mss. illegibility); while it's true that I was behind the barn, reading *Air Wonder Stories*, when the Good Lord handed out self-confidence, I did arrive in time to get my helping of stubbornness--if I liked a story no one can convince me that I shouldn't. Also, if I liked it, there was a sporting chance that a fair percentage of my readers would, too. (Exceptions would be where my liking was due to esoteric aspects which pleased me but would be incomprehensible to most magazine buyers.)

I insisted upon a subhead for the title, so that our full title was *Magazine of Horror and Strange Stories*--to give some indication that we weren't exclusively horror.

The first issue was dated August 1963 and should have appeared on sale early in June. I don't know when it did; it was late--but I'm still pleased with the appearance. We'd intended to make MOH bi-monthly from the start, but when the August issue was finally out, it was already too late to make the next issue October; we dated it November. And again, I turned to Belknap Long for a slight revision of one of his fine old *Weird Tales* appearances: *The Space Eaters*. I noted it as coming up in the filler about FBL that ran at the end of his story in the August issue. (When a story did not fill the final page, my plan was to occupy the space with extra comment about the author and, where possible, his latest work, whatever its nature.)

That was where August Derleth came into the picture and stayed with us until the very end. It seems that Arkham House had reprinted the original version of *The Space Eaters* in their collection of tales by Frank Belknap Long, *THE HOUNDS OF TINDALOS*. By contract, Frank was free to let me have either the original or a slightly revised version, but Arkham House got the check, which

would be split with FBL.

In the first issue, readers were invited to write me their opinions as well as nominate favorite stories for reprint in future issues. I started at once tabulating votes on the placing of the stories in the August issue and requests for reprints. When I used anything from the request list, I'd thank the reader who asked for it in the blurb for the story and see to it that he or she got a free copy of the issue (or a one issue extension, if the reader was a subscriber). Since there were many duplications, of course, the first reader who asked for it got the thanks. Of course, the story had to be one which I, myself, hadn't already selected for reprint.

The request list grew and grew; many of the items on it were either too long or were unavailable to us because I could not get reprint rights from the author or author's agent at the rate we were able to pay--generally 1/2¢ a word, sometimes more sometimes less. (The agent for Henry Kuttner and C.L. Moore made impossible demands--Sam Moskowitz has had the same trouble with him.) Derleth usually asked a little more for his own or his best-names list, but he was consistently gracious about the situation and gave MOH good advertising in his own Arkham House fliers, and later in *The Arkham Collector*.

I, myself, like to be in volume one number one of a new magazine which appeals to me. So I pulled out my own tale, *Gourmet* (the slightly revised edition, which appeared in *Renascence*--Jim Blish's and my attempt at a literary "little" magazine in the days of the Vanguard Amateur Press Association). However, I wanted to have the opinion of an ordinary reader.

(The story was first written when I was in a CCC camp in 1939, for the first issue of Paul Freehafer's *Polaris*. [I also drew the cover for that initial issue of *Polaris*, but there was somewhat less applause.] It was entitled *The Gourmet* and turned out to be the most popular item in the issue. Bob Tucker inquired in his own fanzine why Doc Lowndes wasn't selling regularly to the big slick publications--indicating that he believed that I could write. The answer to his question, of course, was that Doc Lowndes *wasn't interested* in the subjects to which the big slicks were generally confined and had even less interest in doing weird or science fiction their way. So, I see that it was as early as 1939 that I made the decision to accept being poor all my life if that was the only way I could write my way and perhaps get it published. Of course, I did not foresee then that the means would generally be putting my stories in my own publications at their low low rates.)

I showed *Gourmet* to our advertising manager, Ed Zoty, who had once worked for William Clayton and knew the story of the sudden downfall of the well-selling Clayton chain toward the end of 1932. Harry Bates had told me the inside story, and Ed confirmed it; however, he added that the reason *why* Bill Clayton defaulted on a crucial final payment was that he was tied fast to slow horses. Ed liked the story but suggested that it would be clearer with a little introduction. Thus came the second and final revision, and I now called it *Clarissa*.

Unfortunately, I had to choose between Mark Twain and Robert A.W. Lowndes when the galleys came back and I dummied up the book. Not that our two stories were the same length, but to use Mark, I'd have to pull out two shorter stories and my own was one of the two. Somehow I had the feeling that Mark Twain's name on the cover of that first issue would have a somewhat larger selling value than my own. So *Clarissa* appeared in the second issue--and, bigosh, came out first place in the readers' poll; Belknap's *The Space Eaters* was second, and *The Charmer*, by Archie Binns, third. (The Binns story was somewhat abridged from the old *Ghost Stories*; I forget the original title, but it was far from good.)

With the second issue, I started one of my imitations of the old magazines I loved. (Had I been clairvoyant, I'd have used the title *The Eyrle* for the letter department in MOH--not being so, I'd pre-empted that title for the letter department in *Exploring the Unknown* when I put my first issue together in December 1960.) The first one was to run an excerpt from a story to be featured in the next issue, as in Farnsworth Wright's *Weird Tales*; the second was to have a double-barrelled voting coupon on the last page in the issue, so you could cut it out without mutilating the text of a story, as in Harry Bates' *Astounding Stories of Super Science*. At first, there were only ads above the coupon; later, I gave over the entire final leaf to it.

The first story to be announced as "coming next issue" was *The Seeds of Death*, by David H. Keller, M.D. And I started to play a game, the object of which was: How long could I put a different well-known name of the 20's and 30's in weird or horror or fantasy fiction on that page? Sooner or later, of course, I'd want so much to repeat one of the names that I'd call the game off. But I was astonished at how long I managed to keep it up: 20 issues. Then I ran an excerpt from Dr.



Keller's *The Abyss*.

The first two issues were printed on a good grade of paper which stands up rather well, as compared to the cheaper paper we went to starting with the third issue (it bulked up more, too, making the magazine look thicker). In the second issue, I tried running an article on a true horror case: *Hungary's Female Vampire* (Countess Elizabeth Bathory) and asked the readers to vote on whether we should run an occasional article of that nature in the future. (Since I wasn't so fond of the idea myself, it was a relief when I found a sizeable plurality was opposed; I'd accepted the article for reasons which have now become obscure to me, aside from my sustained conviction that it was well done and really quite a good example of historical horror.)

With the third issue, I could no longer resist the temptation to start a letters department. It's not only that I myself always enjoyed these departments, but that I found from experience that I'd get more letters from readers when my publication had a letters department than when it didn't. And I wanted feedback. I started it off following Farnsworth Wright's practice of excerpting, and not publishing complete addresses. Unlike Wright, however, I'd have some sort of comment upon nearly every letter--partly because I generally chose excerpts that asked questions or raised points worth commenting on.

At first, it looked as if MOH was going to be a real winner; but, as was the case with *Exploring the Unknown*, the final returns showed only the MOH was worth keeping alive--for awhile, at least. The Acme News accounting department was something less than splendidly competent--something for which those who liked my (and other) Health Knowledge magazines should be grateful. A number of titles lasted far longer than they would have had competent accounting disclosed the fact they were consistently losing money a year or so earlier.

With the fourth issue, we went to saddlestitch binding on all of my titles. I remain of mixed feelings about saddlestitch binding; those issues are certainly easier to open and read than the standard binding ones, and that becomes more important each year as the paper ages. But they're hard to file; first of all, there's no backbone, which means no identification when only the spine is showing; worse, they slip and slide all too easily. Putting them in a special binder, I suppose, is the most sensible solution--one I've never gotten around to trying; I prefer to have my individual copies loose.

The readers' response to MOH was generally favorable to enthusiastic from the very start. However, the tenor of it was very similar to that you'll find in *The Eyrle* in *Weird Tales*. There was just enough appreciation of the "classic" authors and stories (and requests for specific tales) to justify my continued use of them. Some readers objected to H. G. Wells ("you can get him anywhere") but enough others realized that the particular stories I was re-running were *not* to be found in the general collections of Wells (which were devoted to his science fiction, not his weird or strangely whimsical tales), to encourage me. I ran a story by HGW in each number of volume one, then let him become occasional.

The response to the new fiction varied, but during our first two volumes some new story in the issue would rank among the top five when votes were tabulated. A "new story" might either be one from an author previously unpublished, or one who hadn't been getting acceptances very long, or a first publication of some-

thing by one of the oldtimers. It would not be until our 24th issue that a new story took first place: That was *The Eye of Horus*, by Steffan B. Alekti--his second appearance in MOH. Two issues later, he'd repeat with *The Last Work of Pietro of Apono*. All that made it clear, by the end of our first volume (November 1964--we had finally managed to achieve bi-monthly appearance with the September issue, #5) was that the participating readers did not really want the magazine I'd had in mind when we started. They wanted to read the old stories from *Weird Tales*, which they'd heard of but never seen. One surprise to me was a letter which told me that the cover on #1 was too gaudy; I wondered then, and still wonder now, if my leg was being pulled. However, just out of curiosity as to whether any other readers would agree, I ran that excerpt. No one else wrote in to agree.

Another oddity in the first batch of letters I ran was one pleading me to ignore requests from the Merritt-Lovecraft-Moore-Howard fans to reprint material by those four authors. The writer warned me, "...if you start using that stuff you are also going to meet the inevitable fate of other magazines which published the works of these stereotyped mimics. ... Once you start on these people you will be just another version of the same old thing." That letter was received before the requests for the four authors above started to come in. While I did not agree that those four authors had, in effect killed *Weird Tales*--I'm more inclined to agree with Sprague de Camp that it was the death of Howard and Lovecraft and the retirement from fiction writing on the part of Clark Ashton Smith, that gave WT the blow that eventually proved fatal.

(At least it was fatal to the Farnsworth Wright WT; Dorothy McIlraith brought out a different magazine, which I feel has been demeaned unduly. While we did not see many, if any, of the finest sort of tales to be found in Wright's days, we also were spared any number of truly dreadful stories, too. Wright realized intellectually that he had to cater to the less literary among his readers; even if he had sufficient high quality material to fill each issue, it wouldn't be wise to fill an issue with nothing but the very best. A few readers would love it, but the general run would tire quickly. Unfortunately, Wright went too far; it wasn't necessary to run quite so bad material for the sake of thrills. I suspect that, emotionally, Wright resented the necessity for compromise; at any rate, he did exactly the sort of thing that such a person does--he consistently overdid the thing.)

I realized, too, that a continuing genuinely literary anthology of horror and strange stories wouldn't endure. The highest cannot stand without the lowest; I would, then, use a fair percentage of pulp thrill-tales from *Strange Tales* and others as well as WT. But I'd only select ones which gave me pleasure to re-read. An exception would be a story which I did not greatly care for, but which many readers asked for, and which I could see was nonetheless well done.

As to Merritt, Lovecraft, Moore, and Howard: The complete short stories of Merritt were then still available in an Avon paperback, so I saw no point in reprinting any of them, even were I able to obtain reprint rights at a reasonable rate. At the time, I believed that some Lovecraft material was out of print, so I did run one of my favorites which, so far as I could discover, was not among the most commonly reprinted HPL tales: *The Dreams in the Witch House*; and some of the Derleth-HPL material seemed to be in order. Clark Ashton Smith was generally unavailable at that time, though some of the volumes of collected stories could still be had from Arkham House; so I selected items from the two out-of-print volumes. There was a hardcover collection of C. L. Moore's Northwest Smith stories; however, some of the others would be worth running in MOH. Unfortunately, her agent demanded a price for one-time reprint that I would not consider paying. It seemed foolish to me then, and still does now. It's not as if there were constant demands for reprinting CLM's tales, and to let me have one or two at what I could pay would not deprive her of the chance of getting more for the same re-

print somewhere else. A working author *needs* constant exposure; but even a retired author can benefit from frequent exposure: some editor or publisher, who was not previously familiar with the author, or who had forgotten about the author, might be interested in further reprints at better rates. As to Robert E. Howard: all the published Conan stories were in print, so they were out; but there was unpublished Howard material--some of it good enough to use as "new" stories--and a good deal of first rate non-Conan material, available only in the big Arkham House book, and some not in print at all anywhere. I did run one "new" Conan story, and rejected another (which was, of course, published elsewhere; fine--I would have taken it, perhaps, had it been shorter, or my budget higher; what I could not see was using so much of my meager resources for a story which, to my eyes, had so little of Howard's best qualities.)

An oldtime fan, Richard Kyle, sent me a cover design for MOH, which was both tasteful and interesting. He offered it free; we accepted and gave him a free subscription. It appeared once, then my publisher got one of the artists who did work for other Acme News publications to design a new logo and cover for MOH. It was colorful; we used it with different color schemes for two successive issues, then had the artist, Fred Wolters, do black-and-white scenes from stories. We retained the big word "HORROR" with dripping blood for four issues. Wolter's illustration for Ray Cummings' *The Dead Who Walk* (April 1965) still strikes me as being good; his one for H. F. Arnold's *The Night Wire* (June 1965) wasn't so good; we found another artist, Carl Kidwell who did what I considered very good illustrations for Adam's *The Torment of Hope* (August 1965) and Grege La Spina's *The Devil's Pool* (November 1965).

As to that blood-dripping logo: I didn't like it--it made the magazine look like a comic book--but reader reaction was mixed. Eventually I was able to show Mr. Elson a growing list of readers who said they liked MOH but felt that the logo cheapened the magazine. Sales being not so good that we'd be risking a falloff by such a change, he agreed to try a different style, and I picked the jagged lightning type that appeared on the next issue, #12. Mr. Elson also decided to try a full-color cover illustrating a story. We got one from Gray Morrow, depicting a scene in Robert Bloch's *The Faceless God*. It came out rather well, and I got a lot of mail praising it, but, personally, I found it disappointing; artistic, but lacking in punch.

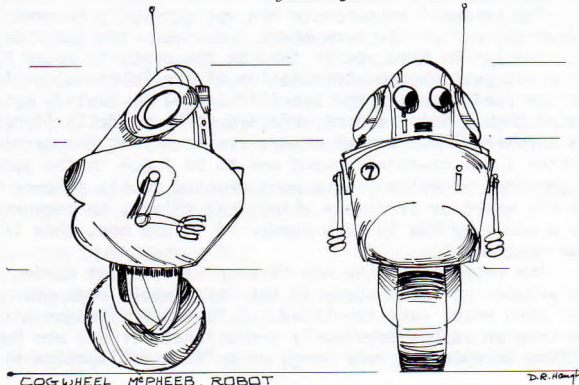
And it was at this point when MOH had its first encounter with death. I suggested that we date the issue "Winter" and put MOH on an irregular basis--rather than fold it up altogether. Mr. Elson OK'd that, since it did not in any way obligate him to bring out another issue. We stopped accepting subscriptions, although I see now that I didn't delete the "published bi-monthly" from the indicia; whether it was sheer oversight, or that was a reason that would exculpate me, I no longer recall.

Meanwhile, Health Knowledge had tried a detective magazine called *Chase*. It was a package deal from a West Coast author; I did the production work and read proofs, etc. With the third issue, I was invited to take it over as full editor. However, getting good stories for it at low rates was something else. I did put together a third issue, and had a fourth closed and pasted up. The publisher went pale at the editorial budget for #3, and paler still at the sales reports on #1. That 4th issue was never published. My report of the editorial cost (we paid on publication) was the final blow. It was, as I recall, over \$400. MOH was coming out considerably below the original \$250 budget; I'd gotten the message (subliminally) that I'd do well not to go that high--and even the first issue (most expensive editorially that I brought out) was a little under the limit. I'd put a reprint--Edgar Allan Poe's *Thou Art The Man* into that 4th *Chase*, but it still cost too much.

However, I did see opportunity sneaking up to my door; I suggested that we bring out a reprint type of mystery magazine, on the same budgetary basis as MOH. We'd make it a quarterly and advertise back issues of MOH in it, too. The back issue sale of all my reprint weird-science fiction-fantasy titles remained good up to the very end--in fact, perhaps somewhat better, as we got full cover price at the very least for a back issue.

Thus *Startling Mystery Stories* was born. Intentionally, it would not be on quite as high a literary level as MOH. It would be a mystery magazine in the sense that there must be a mystery element in all the stories; and where there was not a "supernatural" explanation, then the story should nonetheless be weird or bizarre. Some material originally set up for MOH might be usable in SMS if the need arose; but a transfer the other way would be less likely. I'd go for the thrill tales and generally forget about the classics.

In the event, I couldn't utterly forget the well-known names. The first issue had Poe and Lovecraft, as well as Derleth and Robert Bloch. And I decided to see how Edward D.



Hoch's "Simon Ark" stories would go--at least the supernatural-seeming ones. I'd accepted Ed's first story, *Village of the Dead* eagerly back in 1955 for *Famous Detective Stories* and asked for more. As I wrote Ed recently (1975), I'm sure he would have come through, anyway--but we can wonder whether anyone else in the pulp field would have accepted that first Simon Ark story. By 1966, Edward D. Hoch was a name in the mystery-detective magazines; so I led off the first issue of *Startling Mystery Stories* with *Village of the Dead*.

In the autumn of 1965, I sold my house in Suffern and Dorothy and I took a cooperative apartment on 5th Avenue (at 108th Street) right across from Harlem Meer. Every window in the apartment looked out on that little lake: lovely! At the same time, James Blish, who had recently married Judy Lawrence, had moved back to the city and the Blish apartment was within easy reach of mine. I asked Judy if she'd like to try doing a cover for the new magazine. It would be for little more than the dubious honor of appearing on volume one number one--namely, \$50. for a black-and-white drawing that would fit into a box on the cover. I wanted a scene from or a weird-looking symbolization of Lovecraft's *The Lurking Fear*.

I don't remember for sure whether what Judy presented was two sketches or two finished drawings. When I saw them, however, I knew that they'd never be accepted, although I represented them as being good examples of the sort of weird art that was being published these days. What happened in the end was that a staff artist, Hubert Carter, did a weird-looking scene from no story in the issue at all; it wasn't anywhere near as good artistically as either of Judy's efforts--but it was representational, and that is what was wanted by the publisher.

And another experiment started with the first issue of SMS; it struck me as being the right sort of magazine for reviving Jules de Grandin. I ran a de Grandin tale in each issue of volume one, and the readers' response showed that I'd guessed right, this time. There were a few who didn't go for them, but the majority feedback was decidedly in favor--including a number of keen readers who noticed flaws in the stories but loved them anyway. The chief flaw, of course, was that Dr. Trowbridge could not learn from experience. In every story he had to be as incredulous about the reality of "supernatural" horrors as he was the first time. That is why the de Grandin tales are best read one at a time, and not in too rapid succession.

We made *Startling Mystery Stories* a quarterly from the start, and managed to bring it out every three months--something of a record for Health Knowledge quarterlies. (The term was likely as not to mean, "we'll see if we can get it out every three months, but don't count on such regular publication.")

Meanwhile, Glenn Lord had uncovered an unpublished original story by Robert E. Howard, entitled *King of the Lost People*. There was reason to suspect that this might be the story that Harry Bates had accepted for *Strange Tales* and announced as coming next issue in the January 1933 number of ST, under the title *Valley of the Lost*. It was more science fiction than weird, but Bates had been using some "weird scientific" tales (as Farnsworth Wright designated them) in *Strange Tales*, so that did not make it impossible that *King of the Lost People* could be the tale in question. The condition of the original mss. showed that it had been sent out and returned, and the mark of a paper clip in the upper left hand corner could indicate that a rejection slip had been there for a long time. One gets the impression that Robert E. Howard did not keep pushing stories that had been rejected by the first market he sent them to--but we must remember that there were very few markets at that time.

It was taking a chance, but I took it. Issue #13 of MOH was dated Summer 1966, and I had an illustration from the Howard story for the cover and changed the title to *Valley of the Lost*. Then, just as the issue was coming off the press, I got another letter from Glenn Lord. "Six boxes of Robert E. Howard's papers and files were just uncovered by me, where they had been lost for the past 20 years approximately. And, by all the gods, *The Valley of the Lost*, with annotations by editor Bates, is among the papers. And it is not the same as *King of the Lost People*, alas for us."

So it goes. It turned out to be a first class weird tale, far superior to the other story, and should have been a natural for *Weird Tales*. The spurious *Valley of the Lost* was more or less liked by MOH readers--it placed third out of six when all the votes were counted. One reader thought we'd been gulled because the story mentions television, back in the 30's; what that reader didn't realize was that television broadcasts started in the late 20's--although TV was crude and little more than a rich man's toy until after World War II.

The true *Valley of the Lost*, then, ran in the Spring 1967 (#4) issue of *Startling Mystery Stories*, and was better liked than the other story, although it was pushed out of first place by the votes for Seabury Quinn's *The Tenants of Broussac*, one of

the strongest of the early Jules de Grandin stories--the second of the series.

The June 1965 issue of MOH ran a reprint of Francis Flagg's fine short story, *The Distortion Out of Space*. It had some similarities to Donald A. Wollheim's first-published tale, *The Man From Ariel*, which appeared in the January 1934 issue of *Wonder Stories*. Since the Flagg tale was published in the August 1934 issue of *Weird Tales*, Don (and perhaps some other fans) thought that Flagg had been influenced by the first of the two stories; but it turned out that *The Distortion Out of Space* had been written and submitted to Farnsworth Wright long before December 1933 when that issue of *Wonder Stories*, containing *The Man From Ariel* went on sale. Wollheim wasn't resentful of what appeared to be an imitation; he was flattered--just as I was flattered when Damon Knight's much-lauded short story, *To Serve Man* in the second issue of *Galaxy* proved to have the same fundamental theme as my own story, *The Peacemakers* (by Mallory Kent) in the August 1942 issue of *Future* combined with *Science Fiction*. And DAW comes into that, too; he gave me the idea. Back in those days, story ideas were handled in true communal fashion among the members of the Futurian Society of New York; without any written agreements, it was understood that a story idea should go to the person who, it seemed, could write it up best, or was most interested in doing so.

But something happened in relation to reprinting the Flagg story that changed my policy at the Health Knowledge magazines. The author had died, and the copyright office confirmed my suspicion that copyright had not been renewed on that story. It was therefore in the public domain. But before it was published I heard from Forrest J Ackerman that he was the agent for Flagg's stories, for the benefit of an indigent relative of the late author. The question was: What should I do about it?

Legally speaking, I didn't have to do anything: just run the story and draw attention to the fact that it was in the public domain. That would certainly help keep expenses down--every \$25 saved might work toward the saving of the magazine.

Morally speaking, I felt that it was wrong to stand on our legal rights. Could I get the publisher to see it?

My decision was halfway between cowardice and rectitude. I did not bring the issue up at all; I simply suppressed the information that the story was in public domain, and had Ackerman sent the standard fee for one-time reprint.

From that time on, whenever I was able to get in touch with an author, or the author's agent, or relatives (direct relatives, such as spouse, parent, or child--not distant ones), I paid no attention to the expiration of copyright matter. There were still plenty of such public domain stories where I had no idea as to who to write to or ask.

To protect myself, I began to run copyright notices with each story that wasn't a "new" one or a classic--published over 56 years ago, which meant that all protection had vanished. So when readers saw the "no record of copyright renewal" below a story, that was an indication that nobody got paid for our running it. When a "by permission" of the author or agent appeared, that indicated that we'd paid our usual fee; and to protect the author further, I made no mention of the renewal question.

In some ways, I'm a slow starter. It wasn't until late in 1966, when I was working on 1967 issues that I realized the obvious in relation to artwork appearing in those old issues of *Weird Tales*, *Strange Tales*, etc. Of course H.W. Wesso, Frank R. Paul, Amos Sewell, and others hadn't renewed copyright on their drawings in each issue of the magazines as it reached first copyright expiration. (The expense would have been ruinous and the benefits ephemeral.) So in the third issue of SMS, I ran the Wesso illustration for Hugh B. Cave's *The Door of Doom* from *Strange Tales*, to see if readers would like to have the old artwork revived. The response was most favorable, so the practice was continued. (In many instances, I just could not get clear enough reproductions from Xerox copies of the illustrations. In others, the illustration either wasn't good enough, to my eyes, or it gave too much away.)

Wesso and Paul were gone, but Virgil Finlay was very much with us. He had arranged to secure rights to his artwork and offered me large quantities at reasonable rates (reasonable compared to what he was presently getting for a new drawing the same size.) So everything readers saw by Finlay on the covers of our magazines was paid for. The only time I ran anything by him inside the book was when he graciously "donated" the portraits of Jules de Grandin and Dr. Trowbridge--to my mind, the only adequate representations of those two characters ever published; and, for once, Trowbridge looks older rather than younger than de Grandin. (I never asked Seabury Quinn about that, I regret to confess: my own feeling was that Trowbridge was older.)

After two issues published semi-annually, *Magazine of*

Horror became strong enough to appear quarterly, and three issues later, we returned to the bi-monthly schedule. We also had a new printer and a separate typesetter and typesetting process. In between times, Sam Moskowitz had been digging out some old 19th century and pre-Great War (1914) weird tales, published in the popular magazines of the day, and by well-known writers of the time. I couldn't pay for the stories themselves, but I did manage to get around that barrier by paying Sam \$25 for one-time use of a new introduction to each story. If any of them ran under 2,500 words (and, I must confess, I did not count word for word) then Sam was our highest paid author, so far as word rates went. When I reprinted my own stories and did considerable rewriting, I charged either \$50 or 1¢ a word for the rewritten parts, whichever was lower, but not under \$25. Dr. Sam Johnson would, indeed, call me a blockhead--but that's the way I am, and I'll never be rich except by lucky accident.

It was at the 1966 Lunacon that I first met the maligned Sol Cohen, who invited me to write editorials for *Amazing Stories* and *Fantastic*. I told him that I'd be willing, provided that we decided not to add a science fiction title to our reprint list. (I'm old fashioned enough to believe that an editor should not contribute to competing magazines in his own field.) That was somewhere between falsehood and truth; Mr. Elson had asked me what I thought of bringing out a science fiction magazine--Acme had been distributor for *Gamma*, about which I can't find anything kind to say. I advised him (remembering the *Chase* fiasco) that the editorial costs would be higher than he liked, and the sales potential lower in proportion. (I did not want to be a regular science fiction editor again with a jellybean budget.)

However, Sol's offer set the wheels to revolving in that area where my brain should be. I had no objection to a reprint science fiction magazine, run on the same basis as MOH and SMS. That would be fun. And I could use Sol's offer as a lever to pry payment for editorials out of my publisher. So I told Mr. Elson about the offer and added that I'd had an idea for a low cost science fiction magazine. Thus *Famous Science Fiction* came into being; and I called Sol Cohen back to say, sorry, can't write editorials for you because I'm going to be too busy writing editorials for my own science fiction title. For some years thereafter, Sol used to telephone me every once in a while, just to talk. I think he needed to talk to someone in the field who wasn't after his scalp and who had some sympathy with the problems of being a publisher with practically no capital. He didn't think much of my reprint magazines, so didn't consider me a competitor. And, really, I had nothing against him; he'd inadvertently done me a good turn. He wanted me to take over *Amazing Stories* and *Fantastic*, but having heard so much about his fast promises and slow delivery when it came to writing checks, I wouldn't consider leaving a job where my paycheck was there every Friday, small as that check might be. I told him I just didn't have the time or energy to edit magazines on weekends--which was quite true. He always sounded tired and a little bewildered at the resentment people had against him--and quite unaware that he was offending a lot of people constantly by sheer tactlessness. I could afford to feel sorry for him, so didn't take umbrage at his gibes at my titles.

I think that if it were possible to revive just one of my Acme titles (under much better economic conditions, of course) at my choice, I'd find it hard to decide between *Magazine of Horror* and *Famous Science Fiction*. I wonder if the sales would have been better had we hit upon the logo we introduced on the final issue (#9) at the very start. Probably not; anyway, had issue #9 sold well, there'd have been a 10th. As it turned out, the first story in the first issue and the last story in the last issue were by Ray Cummings; and the final issue brought back another oldtimer, Harl Vincent--who, alas, passed on between the time his story was accepted and published.

Jim Blish and others felt that FSF did accomplish what it was meant to do: provide a representative sample of short and novelet length magazine science fiction between the advent of *Amazing Stories* in 1926 and the start of the Campbell era in 1938. As with the other titles, most of the mail was favorable; the few exceptions all indicated that they'd missed the point.

Among the pleasures of handling FSF was the opportunity to write long editorials--I made sure that the publisher got more than his money's worth on word count, but it would have been harder to do it the other way. As it worked out, three of those editorials provided me with the basis for my Boskone book when the invitation to do one came from the Boskone Committee in 1972. I'd hoped to get more into the volume, but even with cutting, those three editorials filled up the space and left only room for a brief afterword.

In 1968, with MOH apparently solid as a bi-monthly, I started doing something I'd long wanted to, in hopes that the readers would approve: run longer stories as serials. For a starter,

there was one of Dr. David H. Keller's most powerful short novels, *The Abyss*, which had appeared previously only in an ill-fated hardcover edition. It appeared along with another short novel, *The Solitary Hunters* (which had run in *Weird Tales* in 1934 and had the distinction of being the first serial WT published wherein each installment was voted by the readers as "best in the issue") in an edition published by Robert A. Madle and John V. Baltadonis in 1948. *The Abyss* is dated and has serious flaws; nonetheless, to my eyes, it has a powerful impact--strong enough to triumph over its defects. A healthy percentage of the voting readers approved of the selection.

What I really wanted to do was to reprint the most popular serial that *Weird Tales* had ever run, according to the testimony of Farnsworth Wright in later years: *The Devil's Bride*, by Seabury Quinn, the first Jules de Grandin story I'd ever read. But would my readers go for a three-part serial in a bi-monthly publication? A poll indicated that they would, so we did it. Sometime during the six months involved, Acme News moved its main office from 119 5th Avenue to 140 5th Avenue, which was just across the street. Whether the stars or the numbers would have suggested that this was an unwise move, I know not; I do know that things began to run downhill shortly afterward.

While *The Devil's Bride* was running, *Galaxy* and *If* magazines went up for sale, and one of the parties interested contacted me to inquire if I'd accept editorship should his company manage to get the titles. I was pledged to secrecy about the offer until and unless the deal went through.

It put me into a dilemma. Certainly I'd have a better-paying job, with possibly better security, than I had at Health Knowledge. And I was conceited enough to believe that I could have been a respectable editor of those two publications. On the other hand, I felt very strongly that I was doing a service in my presentation of *Exploring the Unknown*. Whatever you may think of the subject matter of that publication, my colleague, Dr. Jerry L. Keane and myself, were laboring to offer the publication responsible information on the psychic and occult fields, rather than the usual learn-to-get-rich-and-control-other-people garbage that one sees, along with tiresome predictions about the future bedroom prospects of various celebrities and show people. (I wish them all well, but I can think of better uses for astrological or psychic research than keeping an indiscriminating public aware of what may be "coming up" for these VIPS.)

If mine had been a strong character, I would have gently but firmly declined the offer to leave Health Knowledge at that time. Being weak, and telling myself that I'd really earned this break (which was true so far as that went) I accepted. Fortunately, the deal did not go through; a different company obtained *Galaxy* and *If*, so I was spared making a move which, by now (1976) I truly believe I'd have regretted. Call me the poor man's Don Quixote. I do not regret staying with my children at Acme News, all whom--I'm vain enough to believe--would have been put to sleep when I left.

Then came the first blow in a series that would sink Acme News within a couple of years. One Tuesday morning in 1969, I went in to work (by this time, I was living in Hoboken, New Jersey, which gives me easy access to New York City) to find the sidewalk in front of the entrance surrounded by pickets. It did not seem to me that a strike against Acme News had anything to do with whether or not I should go in and put in a honest day's labor for Health Knowledge, but the crowd clearly felt otherwise. I was torn between principle and sheer cowardice. On principle, it did not seem right to cross a picket line; but, on the other hand, did that line rightly exclude me? While I was standing around, our accountant came up and after a lot of argument bullied his way through. One of the picketeers--a handsome, blond, macho type--danced up to me and informed me that that fellow (Jack--I forget his last name, I regret to say) was going to get beaten up. He was, too, a few weeks later; various bully boys connected with the union (in fact, our receptionist was, it turned out, a spy for the union) discovered when and where to waylay him; of course, the police could do nothing about it. Jack's injuries may or may not have been permanent.

Meanwhile, I finally decide to go home and stayed out two days. The third day I was determined to go in; and, behold, when I arrived there was only one lone picketeer standing beside the entrance.

That was when I learned the facts in the case. The Friday before the strike, an employee at the warehouse had been fired. Apparently he had heard he was going to be, because that noon he went down to the Teamster's Local and signed up. He did not, however, inform Acme News that he had joined the union. Nor was any strike vote taken. The whole thing was a wildcat affair, and a union official who was present out on the sidewalk that first day made no secret that the object was to get us all to sign up. I would have no part of it.

Several times before the strike was settled, Mr. Elson

called me at home, early in the morning, and instructed me to take a cab at 14th Street, where I got off the Hudson Tubes. Various of our people were being threatened. As it turned out, I was not; but there were some scary moments for a non-hero like myself. The worst thing, however, was a raid on the warehouse, in which massive damage was done. That affected my publications in that it took weeks to sort out the magazines which had not been destroyed or damaged and people who wrote in for back issues found that our service in supplying them was "subject to delay", to put it mildly.

The experience opened my eyes to what labor unions can and do to small businesses (not to mention large businesses). It is no longer against my principles to cross picket lines; I may yet refrain out of cowardice.

Shortly after the strike, we shifted to a cheaper printer, although we retained the same typesetter. That made for massive delays. And just before I left for my winter vacation in 1969, Mr. Elson asked me to let him have my folders of expense sheets for all our titles.

I got the message. The titles' days might well be numbered. When I came back I had a proposal which, I hoped, might avert the unhappy day: namely, that we make all our titles quarterlies and raise the cover price to 60¢. That worked. The next thing to do was to dope out a schedule so that I'd still be producing two magazines a month. *World Wide Adventure* had come and gone; we now had *Thrilling Western* to take its place. TW was like WWA in that it had an editorial budget of zero; 100% reprint, except for my editorials and the letters--of which there were not many. Thus we inaugurated *Weird Terror Tales* and *Bizarre Fantasy Fiction*. It was too late to change the lineup for my February 1970 *Magazine of Horror*, so that came out with part one of a two-part serial, *The Duel of the Sorcerers*, by Paul Ernst. I was still working toward my unannounced goal of reprinting the entire fiction content of the old Clayton *Strange Tales*. And if you have all of my Health Knowledge reprint magazines (aside from WWA and TW) you'll find that I did manage to get in all the contents of the first four issues of ST.

The year 1970 was depressing, to say the least; the issues came out badly printed and badly trimmed. They were also much delayed; Acme News was in its final illness, the proximate blow being an abrupt cutoff of revenue due us from South Vietnam as a result of some new government freezing order. I wondered how soon I'd either be let go or just laid off, because I was coming in day after day, week after week, with less and less real work to do because the magazines just weren't coming out. For all his penuriousness in other matters, Mr. Elson kept me on; he hoped that we'd get back in order and he wanted me to handle the magazines so long as they brought in anything at all.

That summer, Acme News went into bankruptcy, the sort of bankruptcy that leaves the owner in possession. Country Wide Publications came in and in September, I was shifted to the Country Wide office on Park Avenue South. It had been decided that we would continue four titles, each appearing bimonthly, and raise the price to 75¢. Those four were *Exploring the Unknown*, *Magazine of Horror*, *Startling Mystery Stories*, and *Bizarre Fantasy Fiction*. An issue of *Thrilling Western* which I had completed was dropped; so was the fourth issue of *Weird Terror Tales*. (Country Wide had, among its comics, both *Weird* and *Terror* titles; a magazine that carried both would make for book-keeping confusion.)

Another strange event that happened was that there was no issue number 59 of *Exploring the Unknown*. It was set up, but never printed. And when Country Wide took over, we shifted to their printers and typesetters. Meanwhile, I had issue number 60 ready--but we couldn't call that number 59, I was told, because dealers had already been billed for 59; the bills had been adjusted, but that number had to be forgotten. So, although the final issue of EXTU was numbered 61, there were actually only 60 issues.

Material from 59 did appear in number 61, which wasn't good for a couple of series that should have appeared in order.

Friday, February 5, 1971. I had two booths in the Country Wide layout, one of which contained my desk and the other the bookcases for books, magazines, and papers I needed. They'd put in for a telephone to go on my desk, but it still hadn't been installed; I still had to go to someone else's booth to take calls.

A call came from Harvey Gernsback. I asked him if he was any relation to Hugo Gernsback; yes, HG was his father. *Sexology* magazine was still running and they were in the market for an associate editor; would I be interested? I explained that I couldn't talk where I was now (standing in the aisle with the telephone wire extending from someone else's desk) but I'd be happy to discuss it with him could he call me at home. He said he would.

Fifteen minutes later, Sam Moskowitz called me to tell me I



was going to receive a call from Harvey Gernsback. They needed an associate for *Sexology* and Sam had recommended me.

The following evening, Mr. Gernsback called me at home, as he'd promised, and I explained that while I did like the idea of working for *Sexology* and the Gernsbacks, I preferred to stay where I was--even though the ship might sink any moment. I told him he'd hear from me if it did.

Tuesday, February 9, 1971. High noon. I'm called into the office of Mr. Myron Faes, the general manager at Country Wide Publications. Myron was (and is) regarded as an eccentric tyrant there, but he and I got along perfectly well. He asked me to give a hand to Carl Burgos in the comics department when I had some spare time. (Burgos had been an illustrator and had done good western and detective story artwork for me when I was at Columbia Publications; what he wanted was short stories from my reprint magazines which could be reprinted (at no cost--PD material) in his comics. I found a number of them that would fit.)

Myron seemed a little ill at ease. The message was that I had been hired to do a package job for Acme News. But Acme News was dropping all its publications, so I had no more job. Unfortunately, there wasn't any opening for me at Country Wide publications. So my tenure expired as of now.

Then came what I still find hardest to believe: "I was supposed to tell you this last Friday, Bob, but I didn't have the heart."

Two issues of *Exploring the Unknown* and *Magazine of Horror*, and one issue of *Startling Mystery Stories* and *Bizarre Fantasy Fiction* had appeared during the Country Wide period. I would learn later, from someone connected with CW that those issues had not sold poorly and there was no need to kill them. But it had become obvious that Acme News was to be liquidated, not restored to life. And it did go into final bankruptcy in the summer of 1971.

What did I do then? I lost no time in calling Harvey Gernsback telling him that the ship had sunk and, if he were still interested, I'd like to see him. He was and he did. Whether I'd have started at Gernsback Publications sooner had I accepted his proposition on Friday the 5th remains unknown. However, I did start on the Ides of March, 1971--which, despite the unfortunate experience of Julius Caesar, can be a good day for some people.

Country Wide Publications saw to it I got every penny due me, including a half-day's pay for Tuesday the 9th and a pending expense account bill. But that, and memories, and some books, was all I have to show for those ten years. I believe that Mr. Elson would have given me a special parting check if he'd had anything to say about it. (Actually I was promised one by the CW representative at Acme, but it never came through.) And it took me the rest of the week to clean out my effects at the office and see to it that mss. and books loaned to me were returned--at least to prepare them for mailing. I don't know if they were mailed.

It's a shame that the issues of *Startling Mystery Stories* and *Bizarre Fantasy Fiction* that I'd prepared and delivered shortly before the sudden sinking were never published. The issues of *Exploring the Unknown* and *Magazine of Horror* that were about to appear at the time did come out, so that I managed to total 60 of the former and a full six volumes (36) of the latter. *Startling Mystery Stories* also concluded with the end of a volume (18 issues).

The unpublished issue of SMS had an excellent novelet by David Charles Paskow, a frequent letter-writer to my magazines. It would have been his first appearance in the fiction department; I don't know whether the story has been published elsewhere or, if it was, he lived to read it.

When the first science fiction magazines I edited vanished due to the paper shortage in 1943, I felt that I'd been poorly treated by science fiction fans. Fortunately, I was then editorial director of the entire Columbia pulp chain, so wasn't out of a job. But when we revived *Future* in 1950, the response to that first issue showed I hadn't been forgotten. And the

support and enthusiasm that my Health Knowledge reprint titles aroused will warm me for the rest of my days. It was always a matter of inadequate distribution; true, some people bought this or that issue and felt they'd wasted their money. But the overwhelming complaint, from the beginning to the end, was "I can't find the magazine on my local newsstand."

Since 1971 we've seen other possibly worthy fantasy and reprint titles destroyed by the same uncaring forces that stunted the growth of my titles. I see no reason to change my opinion that there will be no fantasy or science fiction magazines left by 1980--with the possible exception of *Analog*, providing that Conde Nast is not then being run by people who have forgotten John Campbell, or never knew him in the first place.

There was never much money working for Health Knowledge. Even if there had been, it'd be gone now because I have no talent for conserving funds. Nonetheless, I feel very much richer for the experience and don't regret a single year of it.

---Robert A. W. Lowndes

Photo Captions

Confusion 12 -- Ann Arbor, January -----

A & B -- BILL BOWERS [Isn't egotism wonderful?]
C -- The infamous collapsing (twice) bed, with 18 fans on it. [And no matter how hard you look, you won't find the 18th--Joe Haldeman. ...you had to be there!]

Boskone 13 -- Boston, February -----

D -- JERRY KAUFMAN tweaking BOWERS' nose, with WENDY LINDBOE in the background.
E -- BOWERS being aggressive. Yes.

Marcon 11 -- Columbus, March -----

F -- andrew j offutt; BOWERS; RANDY BATHURST
G -- BOWERS & offutt...or, How To Become S.F.W.A. President!
H -- BOWERS & VICTORIA WAYNE discussing the Perfect Fanzine.

Wondacon Seven -- Detroit, April -----

I -- LIN & RO LUTZ-NAGEY, RANDY BATHURST. 2nd Row: BOWERS, LEAH ZELDES, TERRY AUSTIN.

J -- BOWERS being held up by LIN & RO.

Lynn Hickman's 50th Birthday Party -- Wasteland, June -----

K -- LYNN PARKS, BILL CAVIN...after the first of that new fannish custom: A Walk Around The Block.

Autoclave One -- Detroit, May -----

L -- JACKIE FRANKE, BOWERS, PATTY PETERS, LARRY DOWNES.
M -- LARRY DOWNES, PATTY PETERS.
N -- MIKE GLICKSOHN, LARRY DOWNES.
O -- DIANE DRUTOWSKI.
P -- PATTY PETERS.
Q -- LYNN PARKS & DAVID EMERSON...with BOWERS saying, "Do I know these people?"
R -- DONN BRAZIER [Glicksohn's Chivas collection in front].

Midwestcon 27 -- Cincinnati, June -----

S -- PARKS, BOWERS, PETERS...with DOWNES & PATRICK HAYDEN in the background.
T -- BOWERS, BARB NAGEY, DEREK CARTER, on the hillside. The object labelled "3" produced the report this issue...
U -- BOWERS (in just one of his tacky shirts) & LYNN PARKS.
V -- BOB TUCKER welcoming SPExpo refugees to Midwestcon...
W & X -- Two of the unfortunates at The Last Table at the Midwestcon Banquet: JACKIE FRANKE & MIKE GLICKSOHN... [Lou Tabakow...You Will Rue The Day!]

Wilcon -- Wilmot, July -----

Y -- BARB NAGEY.
Z -- NAGEY whipping my brother, WALLY FRANKE...
AA -- GLICKSOHN & STEPHANIE OBEREMBT.

The Lutz-Nagey Housewarming -- Cleveland Hts., July -----

BB -- BOWERS & LIN...or, "Oh...Hi there, Ro...!"
CC -- GLICKSOHN [before], & DD [after].

Symposium Two -- Toronto, July -----

EE -- JON SINGER "fixing" in Glicksohn's apartment. [If you look carefully, you can see Mike's dusty Hugo...]

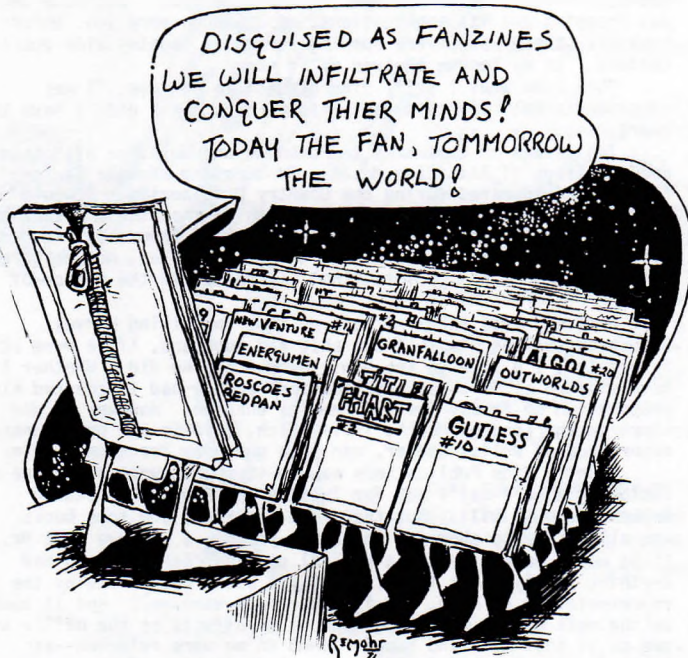
Photo Credits:

MIKE GLICKSOHN: A, B, D, E, F, H, I, J, Q, U, BB

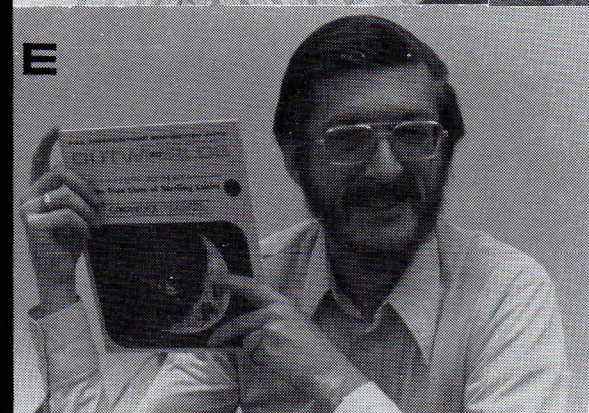
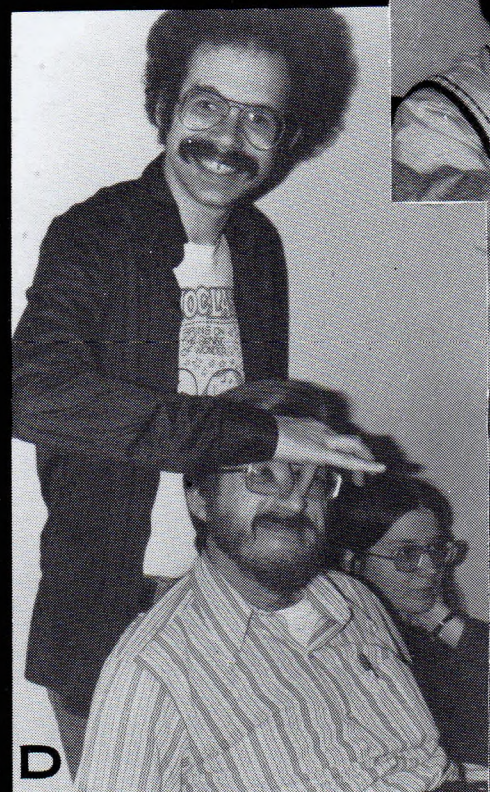
FRED HASKELL: L, M, N, S, T [Copyright © 1976, F. Haskell]

MIDGE REITAN: G

Remainder by BOWERS, other than "C"...who took it, Jackie?

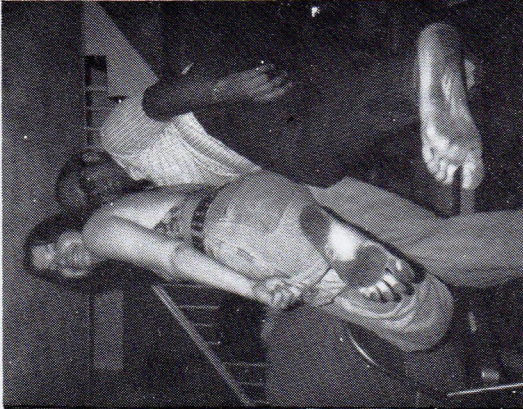


MONTAGE '76





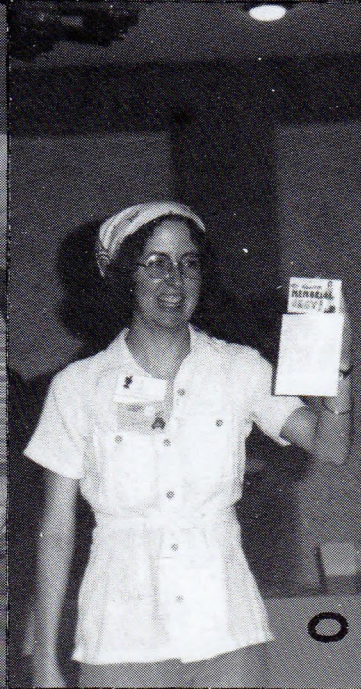
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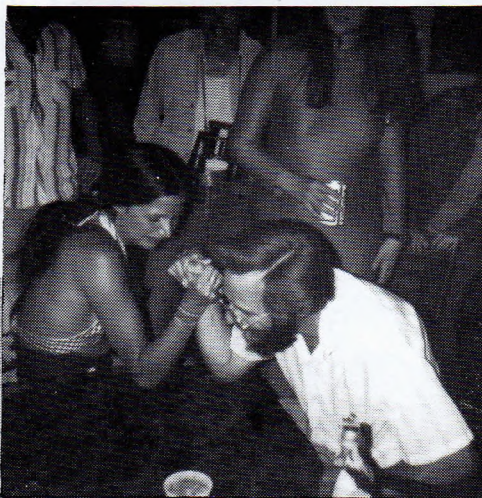
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DD



[To be sung "talkin'-blues" style, in the manner of C. W. McCall -- or Phil Harris, depending on which side of the generation gap you call home. The chorus is lifted from "The Ballad of Jesse James".]

I've drunk his health in a hundred bars,
From Betelguese to the Sands of Mars,
And I'll drink to him again if you'll just buy.
I knew Stan Long for twenty years
(That's just about a hundred thousand beers),
And I'll tell you his sad story if you promise not to cry.

I first met Stan on the blazing sands
Of Perrin's World, where murderous bands
Of aliens tried to kill us all with blaster, sword, and shield.
Fought back-to-back for seven days;
Fought steel with steel and rays with rays --
'Til the Corps came in on the seventh day and made the aliens yield.

Now Perrin's World is a terrible place,
Where they put all the dregs of the human race,
But it's a place where you can get yourself a girl (or a boy) or a drink.
So Stan and I retired that day
To a cool dark dive on the side of a bay
Of sulfurous water colored one un-natural shade of pink.

We sat down to drink some beer;
Drank all of it, and then, I fear
Drank all the wine, the rum, the gin, the scotch -- tequila, too!
The world was in an awful whirl
When I said, "Stan, I need a girl."
Stan poured a glass of creme de menthe and said, "Well, I'll take two."

*Stan Long, he was a man
He was a mighty drinkin' man --
But drinkin' wasn't really his forté.
He loved a hundred girls
On a dozen different worlds,
And he loved 'em in a most peculiar way.*

I looked at him in wild surmise
(Tried to focus bleary eyes),
And told him, "Stan, just stop a minute -- think of where you are!
"These broads are built like sides of beef --
"All muscle, bone, and claws and teeth --
"When they get through with you, there'll be some moaning at the bar."

Well, Stan just laughed and drank some green,
And told me "Joe, you think you've seen
"Bout all there is to see in terms of sexual relations.
"But I'll take me two Perrin chicks --
"I'll take 'em and I'll get my kicks --
"And they'll pay me for my peregrinations."

I shook my head and watched him go,
And got myself a girl named Moe,
Who seemed about the gentlest of that not-too-gentle lot.
But her biceps were the size
Of either of my thighs,
And the strongest muscle on her was her twat.

Spent a day or two in traction,
Then went out to get some action,
'Cause I'd heard a tank ship land with beer and booze.
Went back to that sleazy dive
(Didn't expect to see Stan alive:
(To shack up with two Perrin girls is not the fate I'd choose.)



JOE HALDEMAN

The Ballad of Stan Long

I walked into that sad café
Feelin' guilty, sad to say,
For lettin' poor old Stanley take those two girls off to die.
But there he was in the middle of the floor,
Surrounded by those he-man whores,
Who gazed at him with love-light in their rheumy blood-shot eyes.

*Stan Long, he was a man
He was a mighty fightin' man --
But fightin' wasn't really his forté.
He loved a hundred girls
On a dozen different worlds,
And he loved 'em in a most peculiar way.*

"Stan," I said, "I know you're tough.
"We've fought and bled and killed enough
"Together now, that you won't mind if I express my thought.
"The least of this unholy crew
"Put me in bed -- in traction, too! --
"I just can't help but wonder what you have that I ain't got."

"It's really easy to explain,"
Said Stan, who felt no whit of pain,
"But let me wait and tell you when I think the time is right.
"Reactions from my fellow men
"When they find out what makes me win
"Leads some to laugh, and some to cry, and some ... it leads to fight."

"You might belong to that latter bunch
"(Although you don't, I have a hunch)
"So first I'd like to have a chance to even up our scores.
"I've been drinking steadily,
"Since after midnight, two or three --
"You owe me twenty beers -- drink up! Don't pay, it's on the whores."

The girls, they brought me twenty beers,
And favored me with lurid leers --
As soon as I would drink one down, they'd put one in my fist.
By the seventeenth or eighteenth, I
Was slightly higher than the sky,
But knew that, soon or late, I'd have to go and take a piss.

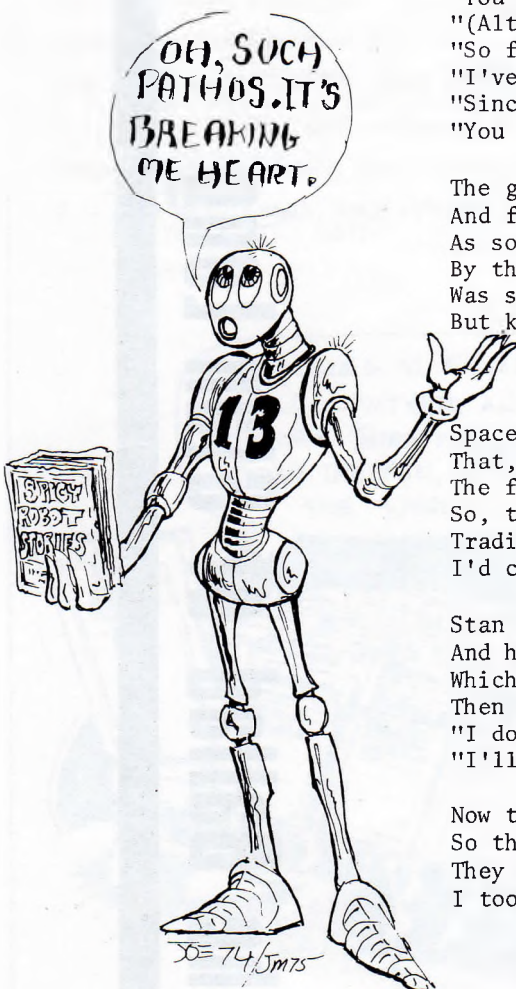
(Let me explain ...)

Spacer men have a tradition
That, no matter your condition,
The first poor boy who leaves the bar's the one who buys the round.
So, though the whores were buyin' it,
Tradition is tradition -- shit!
I'd cross my teeth and grit my legs and never give up ground.

Stan noticed my discomfort
And he ordered me a rum for it,
Which I sent down to my kidneys with a pagan, hopeful prayer.
Then he laughed and said "All right,
"I don't think you're fit to fight.
"I'll walk you to the out-house arm-in-arm, it's only fair."

Now the atmosphere on Perrin's World's enough to rot your teeth,
So the scent inside the out-house was a positive relief.
They had three piss-tubes in the wall, so's not to slow the crew:
I took the first one on the left ... and Stan took the other two.

*Stan Long, he was a man
He was a mighty lovin' man,
And lovin's what he really loved to do.
He was doub-ly endowed,*



*But that's not what made him proud,
In fact, that extra organ made him blue.*

He noticed I was staring, and
Remarked of his bipartate gland,
"Two heads are better than one, that's what the ancient sages say.
"But put yourself in my position;
"Empathize with my condition --
"I'd rather have the love of *one* good woman any day."

Now Stan and I, we roamed the stars,
Fightin' wars and werckin' bars,
For twenty good long years we blazed a rough and randy trail.
And if police we under-rated
We might sleep incarcerated.
But like as not, three women would show up and make our bail.

The ending of this story
Is a moral, in a poor way:
That two plus two can equal one, or four, or even eight.
And if a million women come
Through your life, you'll find the one
Just made for you. That's love; that's luck -- or if you choose, that's fate.

We were bustin' up this carnival
On Io, when Stan spied a gal,
With lovely hair and skin and eyes -- four legs, and other charms.
He went and asked the obvious;
She answered "Yes", and that poor cuss
Just fell apart. He laughed, he cried, he swept her in his arms.

They were married in December by
A drunken priest named Captain Bligh,
And settled down to work upon a yeast farm in Des Moines.
Now, Iowa is kind of dull;
You've seen one yeast, you've seen them all,
So by July a pair of twins had sprang from out their loins.

Much to his surprise, Stan found
He liked the little guys, and 'round
About July the next year, they came up with another pair.
Then another pair next May,
And then Stanley, sad to say,
Had to get vasectomized -- the law on Earth is stern but fair.

Now every time I condescend
To go to Earth, I see my friend
Up to his ass in diapers, puttin' girls and boys through school.
(And yes, the girls all have two legs;
The boys, half that many pegs --
Such unusual mutations never follow Mendel's rule.)

Now, Stan still likes to fight and drink,
But he doesn't do it much, I think,
Not just because the bars in Iowa close down at nine.
He's got responsibilities,
And even seems quite ill-at-ease,
When I regale his kids with tales about their father's time.

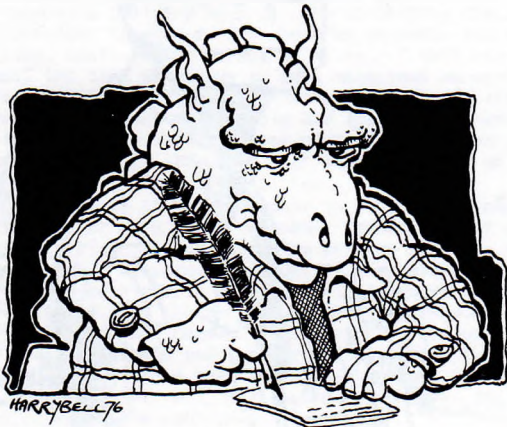
*Stan Long, he was a man,
He was a mighty lovin' man,
But he's settled in a quiet country place.
Seven bedrooms, well-appointed,
And (not mentioning Des Moines) it
Has a bathroom that's unique in all of space.*



--- Joe Haldeman

Neal Wilgus

Interview with ROBERT SHEA



ONE: I know you're co-author with Robert Anton Wilson of ILLUMINATUS! and are presently a senior editor at Playboy and editor of your own anarchist journal, No Governor--could you fill in some details on your life and present activities?

SHEA I lead an almost eerily quiet life in a small suburb of Chicago. We are not far from Waukegan, which produced Ray Bradbury and Jack Benny, and Chicago, of course, is where Buck Rogers originated, so it's not an alien place for me. I was born and brought up in New York, though, and as Nelson Algren wrote, nobody ever moves to Chicago except to make money. The day I was born--Valentine's Day, 1933--Herbert Hoover told Congress that gold was still a sound base for currency. This may have influenced some of the favorable references to gold in ILLUMINATUS! I remember the day the Hindenburg blew up and crashed--it was raining and I was riding a Fifth Avenue bus with my mother when

we heard the news. I also saw the world's first commercial television broadcast, the opening of the New York World's Fair. But this only gets us up to 1939, so maybe we better move on to the next question.

TWO: All right. Could you tell us something about the authors and ideas that have influenced you? Are you a long-time science fiction/fantasy fan? An HPL fan? A Neo-Pagan or occultist?

SHEA I am not now, nor have I ever been, a member of the Communist Party. Jesus, yes, I've been a science fiction fan as long as I can remember. I was reading Buck Rogers before I could read. At the age of 11 I graduated to magazine science fiction when my uncle Ernie bought me a copy of Captain Future. Soon I was reading all the science fiction mags. The first story in Astounding I read was Isaac Asimov's Dead Hand, part of the Foundation series, and it was a thrill to meet Isaac Asimov when I grew up and became a magazine editor. For some reason I've never cared as much for fantasy as I have for science fiction. I have a basically materialistic point of view that also seems to go back to my childhood, although I was raised as a Catholic (as was Wilson, by the way--I don't know if he mentioned that in your interview with him--but I think it's significant). I ceased to believe in magic while I was still a child, and I really don't enjoy a story--or I should say I enjoy a story less--when the basic premise seems, to me, impossible. There are exceptions, of course. I liked THE LORD OF THE RINGS, and I do accept stories about telepathy and teleportation and telekinesis and whatnot as long as these psionic powers are presented by the author as somehow "natural".

I've read very little H.P. Lovecraft. The use made in ILLUMINATUS! of Lovecraft's material is largely Wilson's contribution. I do like what I know of Lovecraft, but for some reason he's not one of those authors who has turned me on and made me want to read everything he's written.

I've pretty much ceased to believe in the supernatural and so am not into Neo-Paganism or the occult. I am very interested in Zen Buddhism. That isn't very fashionable any more, but I think most of the Americans who took up Zen in the 50s and 60s barely scratched the surface. Zen, as I understand it, doesn't involve any belief in the supernatural. It's more like a kind of psychotherapy. All religion is psychotherapy, I think. Human beings have been on this earth for four million years. During that time the human mind has developed into a very sensitive instrument. However, as life has been lived on this planet, that sensitive instrument has constantly been subjected to shock and pain. Something to stabilize and comfort the mind is a necessity. Thus, religion. But most religion is psychotherapy gone astray and instead of easing human misery has caused more of it. Mysticism as practiced in Zen seems to me to offer the benefits of a religion without the drawbacks. So I have been meditating every day for the past two years--the *vazen* method of meditation--counting exhalations up to ten and then starting over again. This has been a profound experience for me and one that has greatly enriched my life.

I am also an adherent of Discordianism, the worship of the goddess Discordia--known in Greek as Eris. We believe that the fundamental principle in the universe is chaos, and that there is so much chaos around somebody must have put it here. Trying to impose order on chaos is a disastrous error--it's one of the fundamental errors of the Illuminati. My chief duty as a Discordian, other than to praise the Goddess and her doings, is to partake of no hot dog buns.

THREE: Dell's marketing of ILLUMINATUS! as a trilogy rather than a one-volume novel and its hard-sell advertising of the books seem designed to make it a cult book like STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND and DUNE. Do you think the book should be promoted this way? Do you think it will succeed?

SHEA Actually, Dell didn't start advertising the book until it began to look like the first printing--without the help of advertising--was selling out. Anyway, promotion can only do so much for a book. It has to succeed, finally, because enough people read it and like it.

FOUR: I understand that 500 pages--close to 40 percent of the original manuscript--was cut from ILLUMINATUS! before it was published. Do you think this helped or hurt the novel?

SHEA The original manuscript was about 1200 typewritten pages, and we were asked to cut about 200 pages, which we did, screaming in agony all the while. This didn't do any mortal, structural damage to the novel. It did cost us some good writing and some funny bits. A lot of what was cut was occult in-

formation in the appendices. Also *When Atlantis Ruled the Earth* was originally a complete screenplay-within-a-novel. Now it's down to a summary.

FIVE: *Any chance that the uncut version will ever see print?*

SHEA If the book catches on enough so that a hardcover or quality paperback publisher wants to produce the uncut version as a service to literature. But printing and paper cost so much nowadays, it's doubtful anyone will want to take a chance. No, the more I think about it, the less likely it seems.

SIX: *Does it seem strange to you that Dell cut as much material as it did and then used larger print in THE GOLDEN APPLE (volume II) to fill it out to book length?*

SHEA I didn't notice that till you called my attention to it. According to my calculations, they get 44 lines on a page in volumes I and III, but only 40 a page in volume II. If they had used the same type in that volume as they did in the other two, THE GOLDEN APPLE would have been about 250 pages long, instead of 272. But LEVIATHAN is only 253 pages, so it would seem to me that a 250-page volume would have been viable. Sure, it seems strange to me, but publishing is a strange business. It is almost impossible to be logical in publishing. It's been my observation that the more logical a publisher's decisions are, the more likely he or she is to succeed. Publishers who fail are logical only five percent of the time. The average publisher is logical 15 percent of the time and manages--just barely--to survive. The successful publisher manages to get the logic quotient up to around 25 percent. The other 75 percent is spent acting like a witch doctor or just ignoring the business altogether.

SEVEN: *Since you and Wilson were both editors at Playboy at the time ILLUMINATUS! was written, I'm wondering why Playboy Press didn't publish it. Or was that too close to home?*

SHEA At the time we got the idea for ILLUMINATUS! Playboy Press wasn't publishing original novels, and a very good friend of mine, Bob Abel, was an editor at Dell. I was looking for an opportunity to write paperback fiction, so I wrote Bob a letter briefly sketching about half a dozen ideas for books, of which a book about the Bavarian Illuminati was one. He thought that one had the most possibilities, so Wilson and I did three sample chapters and an outline and sent it in. On the strength of that we got a contract and began writing the book.

EIGHT: *ILLUMINATUS! touches frequently on anarchism and you edit an anarchist magazine. I'm curious about your ideas on the subject. Does the right-libertarian vs. left-anarchist spectrum seem important to you?*

SHEA The anarchist philosopher with whose views I most agree is Max Stirner. He said that the individual is all there is, and any claim that anything is bigger or more important than the individual is sheer bullshit. I believe that the cause of most human misery is people's efforts to impose the rule of state and organized religion on one another. A society without coercion, in which individuals were guided by their own conception of their own best interests, would be a happy, harmonious society. I would like to abolish government, and I define government as any attempt to use force to impose the will of one person or group of people on others. When an armed robber takes your watch, he is doing the same thing a government does when it collects taxes. The fact that the government claims to be doing the will of the majority doesn't give it any special rights in my book.

I'm not a pacifist, but I think that anarchists should not talk about armed revolutions, because such a revolution would be in effect, a government--imposing its will on others by force--regardless of whether it called itself anarchist. So anarchists should work toward a society without government by means of non-violent resistance and education.

As for the right vs. left split in anarchism, I think those people are wasting too much time arguing about economic arrangements. After the state is abolished, people will operate as capitalists or collectivists, whatever suits them best. The important thing, though, is to get rid of government. First things first.

NINE: *ILLUMINATUS! is dedicated to Gregory Hill and Kerry Thornley, and we learn in Appendix Nui (volume III) that Thornley was a friend of Lee Harvey Oswald and author of an epic poem titled Illuminati Lady. Would you tell us more about Hill and Thornley? Has Illuminati Lady ever been published?*

SHEA They are two of the most creative people I know. They invented the religion of Discordianism after having undergone a visionary experience in a bowling alley in Whittier, California, which also happens to be the birthplace of Richard M. Nixon. Subsequently, or shortly thereafter, they discovered the existence of the Bavarian Illuminati and what they had to say about Discordianism got all mixed up with what they said about the Illuminati. They were in correspondence with Wilson and me and turned us on to all these ideas. Because they introduced us to the subject of the book, is why we dedicated Volume I, THE GOLDEN APPLE, to them. The golden apple refers to the apple with the word *Kallisti*--"to the prettiest one"--engraved on it, which Eris tossed in among the gods and goddesses while they were partying on Mount Olympus. This led to the Trojan War.

Anyway, Kerry Thornley was in the Marines--I don't have the exact dates in front of me--and met and conversed with Lee Harvey Oswald. Oswald was a Communist and Thornley was an Objectivist. By the time they parted company, Oswald wasn't speaking to Thornley. Kerry was quite shocked when his old barracks buddy was arrested for the assassination of John F. Kennedy. He testified before the Warren Commission and wrote a book and some articles about Oswald. Subsequently he went to New Orleans to try to help the Garrison investigation, but when he wouldn't say what Garrison's people wanted him to say--that is, help them nail the people they had already decided to nail--he found himself named one of the assassination conspirators. It was a real nightmare and he's very fortunate that Garrison's efforts came to nothing. Kerry continues to write a bit, and his long epic poem *Illuminati Lady* was published in installments in *The St. John's Bread Wednesday Messenger*, a literary magazine out of Venice, California. Kerry is still deeply concerned about the Kennedy assassination and has a new theory about the mastermind behind it.

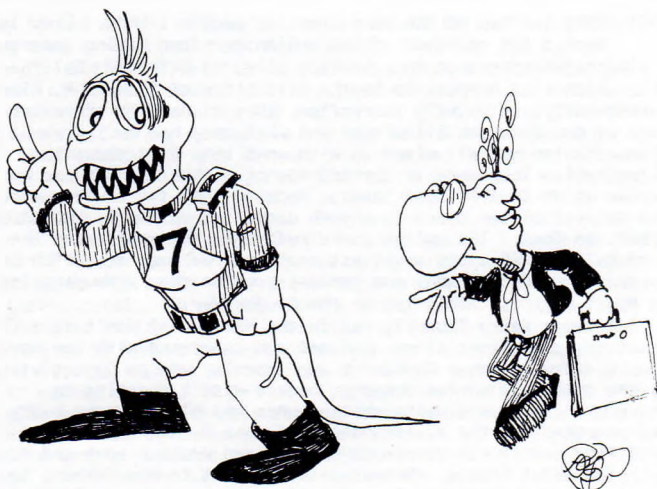
Gregory Hill and Kerry were high school friends. Greg is by vocation an artist, and one of his works of art is the Paratheoanametastikhod of Eris Esoteric--P.O.E.E., which is his personal movement within the Discordian Society. The Discordian Society is for everybody, but P.O.E.E. is--or was--Greg's personal voice. Greg has lived in California most of his life. He recently spent a couple of years in New York, where he experimented with various new forms of conceptual art. Conceptual art is where the real creation is the idea or the process it generates rather than anything concrete or technical. A religion like P.O.E.E. is conceptual art; a correspondence or a newsletter can be conceptual art; a character can be conceptual art. As examples of the latter, Greg has created a number of personae for himself who sign his various writings and bulletins--Malaclypse the Younger, Doctor Ignotum P. Ignotus, Reverend Doctor Occupant and Mad Malik. Greg has now returned to California. He stopped off at my place for a couple of days and we developed a new Discordian Society information leaflet, for those who find the address of Green and Pleasant Press in Volume III of ILLUMINATUS! and write for information.

TEN: *Bob Wilson said that the When-Atlantis-Ruled-the-Earth sections of ILLUMINATUS! were 99 percent Shea--are you a long-time Atlantis buff? Do you think an Atlantis-type civilization in prehistory very likely?*

SHEA For a while, as a kid, I was fascinated by the idea of Atlantis. I even kind of liked the Shaver Mystery stories in the old *Amazing*, edited by Ray Palmer. Atlantis is one of those mythological entities like the Illuminati--it's a kind of esoteric, colorful, dramatic explanation for how things got to be the way they are today. Actually, the archeological and geological evidence, as far as I know, indicates that no such place ever existed. I used it in ILLUMINATUS! to present my own pet version of the *Genesis* story. The Atlanteans are a kind of mythical golden age of humanity, living in peace, prosperity, freedom and happiness. They have a highly developed technology, no morality and no government. Then Gruid introduces the idea of good and evil and that leads to people using force on one another, and the whole Atlantean society collapses. The original sin, you see, was the invention of the idea of sin.

ELEVEN: *How about the theories Erich Von Daniken has made popular in recent years? Do you think extraterrestrial "ancient astronauts" might have once colonized earth?*

SHEA Von Daniken's notions only satisfy people who have a very low opinion of humanity. He takes a primitive carving which distorts human features for artistic purposes and says, "Look, there are no people like this on Earth; therefore this must be a portrait of an extraterrestrial who landed here." This denies that the primitive artist had the capacity to invent forms; he must have copied exactly what he saw. And Von Daniken takes some marvelous piece of ancient architecture and says, "Man



couldn't have done this by himself. Ancient astronauts must have done it." Finally, he gets to the point where he no longer believes that any of human civilization was created by people like ourselves. All the basic inventions were given to us by higher intelligences. Von Daniken is just catering to the wish some people have to grovel before imagined higher powers. ILLUMINATUS! was written, in part, to make fun of such wishes.

TWELVE: *While reading ILLUMINATUS! I checked a map and was surprised to find there really is an island name Fernando Poo--was there really an historic explorer who discovered it in 1472 as Simon Moon implied?*

SHEA Yep, and his name was Fernando Poo. You can find him in the *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*, along with the Illuminati. When he discovered the island he called it Formosa, which means "beautiful" in Portuguese. Later the Portuguese named it after him. His last name is often spelled Po, rather than Poo, but we like Poo better, and it is an acceptable alternative. The incorporation of Fernando Poo into ILLUMINATUS! is a good example of how we worked. A friend of mine, Marion Shea, no relation, told me one of her kids had found an island called Fernando Poo in his geography studies. I said, "Hey we can use that"--we'd already started work on ILLUMINATUS! Soon Fernando Poo had become an integral part of the structure of the novel. We were always keeping ourselves open to vagrant, random discoveries like that. Art is stumbled over, as much as it is created. The recent international crisis over Angola just shows you how dumb governments are--they can't come up with a script any better than what a couple of nutty satirists did years before in a science fiction novel.

THIRTEEN: *Do you have as strong an interest as Wilson does in such things as immortality, colonization of space or Timothy Leary's mind-expanding Neurologic and Hedonic Engineering?*

SHEA In 1960 Eisenhower and Nixon were saying that space exploration was crazy Buck Rogers stuff. Then Kennedy made it a national goal to put a man on the moon, and nine years later we put a man on the moon. What this proves is that technology doesn't just happen. It has to be imagined--perhaps by people who have no idea how to do it--and promoted, and the particular form it takes has to be foreseen and shaped. Unquestionably our society is developing the means to send ever-larger numbers of human beings into space, it's finding ways to extend human life expectancy, and it's developing a technology for controlling the human mind. Wilson and Leary are putting forward a particularly sane, humane, libertarian vision of how to develop these things so that they will enhance human life rather than become new ways of oppressing us. I think this is necessary and I take a friendly interest in it. But my personal priorities are such that I'm not actively involved.

FOURTEEN: *Are you really a time-traveler from the 23rd century as Wilson has implied?*

SHEA Yes--the 23rd century B.C.

FIFTEEN: *What's your view of the Bavarian Illuminati and of conspiracies in general?*

SHEA I thought you'd never ask. Since the publication of the

book Wilson and I have been billed as experts on conspiracy and ILLUMINATUS! as a conspiracy book. Actually, ILLUMINATUS! began with the idea of satirizing conspiracy mania. We were amused by the way the John Birch Society and other anti-Communists were finding Reds behind every tree, and we were even more amused when we learned--through Gregory and Kerry--that the right wingers of this country were scaring themselves with the notion of a super-conspiracy behind all the other conspiracies. Our thought was, "We'll write a book about it and blow their minds." There is also, of course, a conspiratorial mania on the left which is not quite as grandiose. There's a man in Chicago who keeps charging that the Chicago Seven were agent provocateurs sent in 1968 by the CIA to disrupt the Democratic convention in Chicago. There are other left-wingers who believe that Nelson Rockefeller really runs the country.

From time to time it turns out that somebody's conspiracy theory is true. I used to laugh at left-wingers who claimed the CIA and the FBI were spying on all of us. If somebody in the early 60s told me the CIA and the Mafia were conspiring to have Castro assassinated with the tacit approval of the President of the U.S., I would have hooted. But there's a qualitative difference between investigating allegations of individual conspiracies and conspiracy theory. The true paranoid conspiracy theory ties things together until everything happens as a result of one gigantic conspiracy. This is the state of mind we were trying to satirize in ILLUMINATUS! Even the bad weather in Chicago is the work of the Bavarian Illuminati. Our entire civilization is the product of a conspiracy.

The thing is, of course, that conspiracy mythology is a cop-out. It's a way of evading our responsibility for history. We, all of us, the people, if you will, have made our world the way it is. If we don't like it but don't do anything about it, it will stay that way and we're responsible for that, too. A conspiracy didn't get us into World War II. The people of the U.S., most of them, wanted to fight the Germans and the Japanese. Most people supported American intervention in Vietnam. When they stopped supporting, the U.S. got out. To realize that you can affect historical events and that you, as an individual, are responsible for what happens is the opposite of conspiracy mythologizing. The big historical events are the result of countless individual decisions, and it is those individuals, not some conspiracy, who are responsible for the course of history.

SIXTEEN: *Do you think the frank sex and the unconventional shifting of viewpoints in ILLUMINATUS! will alienate a significant part of your audience--or is this where readers' heads are presently at?*

SHEA Of all the reviews I've seen--and there have been over a dozen at this point--not one has complained about all the sex scenes in ILLUMINATUS! Most haven't even mentioned that there is a lot of explicit sex. This leads me to conclude that people who read books regularly--that is, book reviewers--tend to take such things for granted. On the other hand, many people have mentioned the shifts in time, space and viewpoint--some admiringly, some to complain. The structure and texture of the book certainly makes it more difficult to read. But they also will help the conscientious reader to get a gut-level realization of the ultimate truth behind space, time and the human personality. Readers who have kept up with--and experienced--the discoveries of the last decade or so in psychology, philosophy and religion will enjoy the way the book is put together.

SEVENTEEN: *How is ILLUMINATUS! doing so far? Are you satisfied with its critical reception and sales?*

SHEA Delighted. There was always the possibility that it might sink without a trace. I knew we had written a good book, but would anybody pay attention? Original paperback fiction gets virtually no reviews, as a rule. But ILLUMINATUS! has had at least a dozen reviews, all of them excellent. One of the things that still amazes me has been the positive enthusiasm of everybody who reads this book. The one thing I'm sorry about is that none of the professional science fiction magazines such as *Galaxy*, *Analog* or *F&SF* has vouchsafed to review ILLUMINATUS! Granted, the novel isn't simply science fiction. Still, it is science fiction among other things and I'm sure it will have enormous appeal to people who read science fiction. There is a certain insularity in the professional science fiction world which is detrimental to the genre. As for sales, Dell tells me they've gone back to a second printing, which means it's doing pretty good. Yes, I'm happy.

EIGHTEEN: *Have you ever seen a fnord?*

SHEA One just won the Republican primary in New Hampshire.

NINETEEN: *Wilson says ILLUMINATUS! was communicated to you telepathically by intelligent beings from Sirius, the Dog Star. What's your story?*

SHEA It frequently helps an artist to imagine that the work he is creating has a separate life of its own and is being transmitted to him. I found over and over again that a certain alert passivity, a receptiveness, was valuable in writing ILLUMINATUS! Much of the effort of creation should take place unconsciously. Nabokov says he sees his novels as already existing in another universe, and he has to reconstruct them in this universe by putting together the fragments that come into his mind. Stravinsky said, "I am the vessel through which *The Rite of Spring* passed." Keats said that an imaginative writer needs "negative capability," which is the ability to remain comfortably in a state of "uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason." Charles Rycroft, a British psychoanalyst, wrote an essay on the imagination in which he says:

I must, however, state my impression, my conviction, that people who possess negative capability to a high degree seem not to conceive of themselves as opposed to an environment which they have to master by "irritable reaching after fact and reason," but rather as a part of the universe which is capable of absorbing the whole into itself and then re-creating it by distillation in imaginative works; in other and psychoanalytical words, their relationship to "external reality" remains identificatory, without any drawing of impermeable ego boundaries between themselves and other people and other things.

TWENTY: *Are you a party to or supporter of Wilson's suit against the Neo-American Church for \$1,000,000? What's your reaction to Art Klep's accusation in a recent High Times that ILLUMINATUS! was really written by Tim Leary and only credited to you and Wilson in order to avoid Leary's contractual obligations?*

SHEA Whenever I am attacked--verbally at least--I always remember three things: The Buddha's maxim that nothing bounces back faster than hostility. King Charles II's saying, "The more you stir a turd, the more it stinks." And the sad fact that Alfred Kinsey wasted years and shortened his life by taking seriously and attempting to respond to all the vicious attacks on him that followed publication of the Kinsey reports. Nevertheless, Wilson and I devoted years of our lives to ILLUMINATUS! and are rather proud of the result, and it hurts to have some asshole come along and fabricate--out of an old grudge against Timothy Leary--the charge that we didn't write it. Wilson's reaction, treating the accusation as if it were worthy of attention, is most kindly. My own reaction is to be less kind, and ignore the whole business.

TWENTY-ONE: *What are your own publishing plans? Any new books coming up?*

SHEA I'm working, very slowly, on a novel. It's not like ILLUMINATUS! It's about a young man who slowly goes crazy in a typical American big city and commits acts of violence. In other words, the archetypal story of our times. I'm also trying to do a non-fiction book which will be a kind of general statement of the philosophy I've arrived at after 43 years of knocking around on this planet. The novel is about twenty percent finished. The other exists in the form of enough notes to fill a book, but they have to be pulled together. I'm also doing articles, essays, book reviews, things like that. If you'd like to know what I'd like to be when I grow up, I'll tell you. I'd like to be an old-fashioned man of letters, the sort of writer who was common in the Nineteenth Century but who has all but disappeared in our own age of excessive specialization. The man of letters felt comfortable turning his hand to anything--fiction or non-fiction--articles, essays, poetry, short stories, novels, plays, pamphlets. Just a master of the craft of writing. George Orwell and Aldous Huxley are examples. I think you could call Wilson a man of letters.

TWENTY-TWO: *Will 1978 be the year we finally immanentize the Eschaton?*

SHEA It could be, if everybody reads ILLUMINATUS! and takes it to heart. The Eschaton is always immanent. It's just a matter of seeing it.

TWENTY-THREE: *Who really did kill JFK?*

SHEA We all did.

--- Neal Wilgus

THE RILL BECOMES A RIVER

The burning sun arises: the cloudy east
Is drenched with red, and now the outlines grow
Of evergreens upon this mountain's side.
Above, upon the crest, the mount's snow peaked,
And melted snow there forms a gliding stream
Which lightning runs and drops its course 'round rock,
O'er stony ground.

The shallow stream is soon
Descended to a mountain valley, and slows
To meandering across a woodland meadow.
Westward flowing, westward drifting, and next
It disappears beneath some trees, which throw
Dark morning shadows on the crystal surface;
And here it is the does and antlered stags
Come oft to drink, the shaggy bear to fish.
And in these wilds, by Indian hunted once,
The stream is joined by several streams, some clear,
Some stained with the various soils they've rippled o'er--
Then in this one they mix their varied hues,
Losing their separate names.

But now the wood
Is ended, and now the stream runs down a slope
Into a shady pond, whence come in spring
And fall the mallards in their yearly flights,
And hunters too at times have come. But now
Is not the season: the air is not so crisp
As fall, and not so full of youth as spring.

Beyond the pond the stream again renews
And jumps its way adown a sharp incline
In lesser falls and minor cataracts,
Until the final plain is reached. And here
It spreads and smooths its easeful course, it flows
In quiet ripples through the fruitful land
Of fields and farms, of orchards growing strong
And fair beneath the sun. No more the tracks
Of forest beasts are on its banks, no more
The bear and deer, but brown-faced cattle come
To drink, and children sail their home-made boats
Or race along its sides. It's morning yet,
The men are out at work, the women wash,
Or sit upon their steps and mend. The sun
Is but a quarter risen across the sky.

This minor river--for into this it's grown--
Is next asunder split to pass around
A little, single isle of roses tossed
Into its midst--an isle o'ergrown with briars,
Which, like the sun arising behind the hill,
Reddens the eye; but this is quickly passed,
Forgotten, as beyond the isle rejoins
The river into one, and drifts its course
For many miles; it passes through some towns
With high old elms and dusty streets, through fields
Of wheat and corn, murmuring with the sound
Of insects flitting above the seldom splash
Of fish or frog, and with the quiet lisp
Of rustling grasses on its banks. At times
Railroad or highway bridges cross on piles;
A factory or two polute with wastes
The waters, no longer pure as once they were,
But greater, joined by many streams.

At last
The coast is reached, and here a city stands:
Broad, fair, and high the buildings rise in rank
And tier of brick and glass into the clouds;
A city darkened once with factory smoke
And soot, now partially cleansed and purified;
A harbor city, with cabled bridges slung
Across the river, now pouring its mighty force
Unto the mightier sea: and now the docks
Where ocean tankers port and wait, and now
The sea, the sun-flecked sea, the mighty sea:
The river's found its goal, is lost within
These tidal waters: behind it now the hum
Of insects and of towns, behind it too
The alabaster city; in front, all lands
Await its washing on their distant shores.
The sun looks down from high above: it's noon.

--- J. R. Christopher



BEING JOTTINGS, notes, and half-thought-through ideas that may not apply to anything, but seem to describe the way I felt and the things I did from Fall 1975 through April 1976.

When Bill Bowers wrote me for another installment of my long-moribund column, I cast about, rent my garments and gnashed my teeth, but nothing came. So I have washed up on this shore, and pick among the entries in a Journal I've kept for more years than I care to remember.

Cast: Greg, 34; Joan, 36 (wife); Alyson, 5; Mark, 2.7; Jim (twin brother).

Location: Laguna Beach, California

Content: Since I began all this with the intention to keep a record of whatever I wrote, each period has the first paragraph of a new piece inserted, for identification. Otherwise, all is random.

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Fall 1975. Works of the month (November):

CRAB PULSAR OPTICAL AND X-RAY RADIATION THROUGH PINCHING INSTABILITIES, Astrophysical Journal.

The pulsar at the center of the Crab Nebula is a prodigious energy source which radiated pulsed signals in the radio, optical, X-ray and gamma-ray regions. The radio spectrum apparently arises from coherent interaction between plasma streaming instabilities and curvature radiation, as highly relativistic particles stream out from the spinning neutron star (Sturrock, 1971). The higher frequency spectra are a continuing mystery.

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In August I got a call from Univ. Calif. Extension, saying they wanted a money-maker and would I be interested in doing a course on SF with visiting writers to draw in the fans, etc.? So I said yes, because--what the hell--it was a good way to bring some friends to town and hand them some money at the same time. And I dragged in Dave Samuelson, who's a professor of English at Long

SOME DAYS

GREGORY BENFORD

Beach State Univ., and an sf critic (though a nice guy, for being a critic), and made up a list of people to invite. But when push came to shove, I found that we really did need to draw a crowd, so the list became transmongrified, and we ended up with Sberg, Carr, Rotsler, Sturgeon, Pohl, Niven, Zelazny...and the budget ran out. So, despite the fact that there are several good speakers left on the rolls, they ain't speaking because either they're too far away, or they're not well known enough. Lupoff, Tucker, Eklund, Busby...maybe next time. I'd like to make this a seller, so that I can import others next year and turn this into a regular affair, profitable for all. This is usually not extremely profitable, being about \$100 plus expenses, but we typically grease the guest with dinner & drinks and whatever base pleasures he signifies, and all in all it beats sitting at a typewriter. Hell, you can even go to the beach. And, of course, the mshasses get a drib and drab of culture, too. Harlan (Harlan who?) ran a similar bash last year and lost his shirt, metaphorically, because he had a weak contract with UCLA extension and got heavily into out-of-pocket expenses without keeping track. So he ended up making about \$300 or \$400, which is half of what we're making, and he busted his ass, which we certainly aren't. In fact, I don't expect to prepare for the course--BEYOND THIS HORIZON: SF IN PERSPECTIVE and howzat for mixing Heinlein and Panshin in an unholy alliance?--at all. Just wing it, as we sez.

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December: finally finished *In Alien Flesh*:

At first it was not the Drongheda that he found disquieting. It was the beach itself, and most of all the waves.
((added note: Ferman bought it.))

+ + +

Late December: *FILAMENTARY INSTABILITIES OF ROTATING ELECTRON BEAMS* (with Kim Molvig & Bill Condit)

It has been known since the Aston experiments that rotating cylinders of electrons are unstable to electromagnetic perturbations. Recent proposals to use intensive relativistic electron beams for creation of Astron-like configurations should be subject to similar instabilities^{1,2,3}. This paper explores the linear and nonlinear behavior of such modes.

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Finally got hardback copies of *SOCIOLOGY THROUGH SF* from St. Martin's Press. They reprinted two of my stories, *Deeper Than the Darkness* and *Nobody Lives on Burton Street* and I read the sociological analyses without comprehending even half of what was said. What has *Deeper Than the Darkness* got to do with Toennies' *Gesellschaft* and Durkheim's *organic solidarity*? Beats me. And the pages of puffery around *Burton Street* is astonishing--why do people keep reprinting this story? I've always been rather surprised at its success. I couldn't sell it to a major market, back in 1969, so it appeared in *Amazing*. And has been resurrected about 6 times by now. I don't really think it's my best work...

+ + +

I've been traveling 19 days, to Nebraska, New Mexico (where I saw Jim & Hilary), Alabama & Florida. All in aid of physics biz though I did have dinner with Kate Wilhelm & Damon Knight. They're still trying to sell their house in a depressed western Florida economy, and want to move to Oregon, but noting promising looms on the horizon. Damon seems a bit isolated from the sf community; he asked me how things were out there, and whuffo he doesn't get more stories for ORBIT from Name sf people. I suppose the answer is everybody's been rejected by Damon often enough to not make him #1 market, and anyway he publishes a strange, curiously limp brand of stuff lately, so... Only I didn't put it quite that way, of course. Damon's history of the Futurians seems to be going well; he's finding many errors in Warner's *ALL OUR YESTERDAYS*, he says.

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January, 1976

"HIGHBROW ENIGMATIC ZEALOT," HERBERT SAID QUEASILY, EJACULATING SPONTANEOUSLY INTO THE XYLOPHONE.

So Joan & the kids & I went to the Bay Area for a fraction of the holidays, and that's all the noteworthy motion from hereabouts of late, methinks. My official excuse was attendance at the panel on Heinlein at the Modern Language Association annual meeting, which I dutifully showed up for, and got an awful

awful goyful oyfull eyefull of the academic mandarins who lit-crit our product. In all they appeared tame and arcane, as I'd expected. The panel (called seminars, of course) on LeGuin was a certified opaque discourse, full of generalizations that, rather than sweeping, one felt should have been swept. I hear Sberg's hour of trial was sufferable, and ended with his & Barbara's holding forth well in an FER [Fancy Expensive Restaurant], at the expense of academe--bravo. Take them for what you can get, say I, and I should know. Our sf course here at Irvine is drawing well (as we say in the trade) and should have at equilibrium 100 enrolled and perhaps 20 to 50 onetimeonly walk-ins, depending on the speaker's name. This week is Sturgeon & I've been reading *MORE THAN HUMAN*, or rather trying to, because I never made it all the way through in the 50s and doubt I will this time. There is something in me that wants to write more than read.

Along those lines, I've been struggling to finish a 90 kiloword epic, *IN THE OCEAN OF NIGHT*. True enough, a mere sonnet compared to eine kleine Busbywerke, but it's taken me 6 years to do, off and occasionally on. Meantime Gordon & I have finally near-finished *IF THE STARS ARE GODS*, the novel version, which will appear in various forms in several short stories, etc., before bursting into light of hardback. And that will be it: I'm fair done with the writerbiz for the foreseeable. Back to the glories of teaching and physics for me.

Persuant of same, I'm very probably going to end up going to England for sabbatical leave come August. Very probably we'll stay at Cambridge, where I'll be at the Institute for Theoretical Astronomy, working on pulsar and quasar radiation by plasma mechanisms (which appear to be the dominant effect in such high-energy environments). I'm angling to get the government of Iran (our OPEC ally) to pay our way to Tehran for 2 or 3 weeks in December, to give a set of lectures, but that's very iffy. Not Tibet and schlepping for the Daily Lahma, maybe, but a living, and something to nod over in rumination whilst using the fruits of zymurgy.

I got another card from Vonda McIntyre, saying I would indeed have 2 and maybe 3 stories on the Nebula ballot. I'd rather *White Creatures* came in first and *Doing Lennon* second. Because I like WC a bit more than DL, but still the process is more like deciding which of your children you'll toss overboard from a lifeboat, than anything else. This curious conversion that takes place, transmuting inner visions into public commodities, is one I've never gotten used to, and never will. I suppose most writers feel the same way; the processes of the typewriter are so unlike the things that come afterward.

+ + +

I prefer a manual typewriter made in the late 1950s, before the typewriter scene was engulfed by buzzing electrical wordmakers. The pleasures of ra-rap-rapping out stuff with one's own fingers are not to be ignored. Then too, I suspect than an oldish typer is going to become a status symbol. Got a short card from John Updike in response to a letter, and it's typed in a rickety, broken typeface that fairly creaks as you read it. Maybe if one wants to be known as a Great Writer he should cultivate old tools, so that visitors can mumble in awe, "My God! You wrote *LORDS OF THE SPACE-WHACKERS* on *that* thing?" and then go off and tell stories about you. It's not what you write, it's what you do. Look at Harlan. He's virtually a shadow compared to his persona, now.

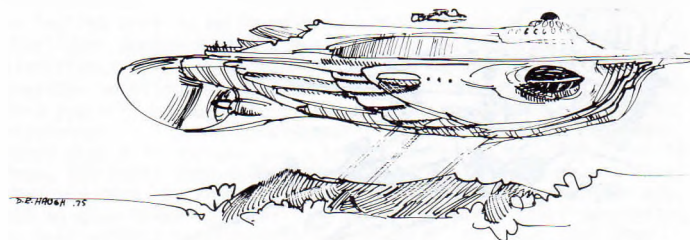
+ + +

How much history would change if the matter of having a large penis could be demonstrated in some other way than, as it usually is, on the battlefield.

+ + +

*PLASMA INSTABILITIES IN THE EARLY UNIVERSE:
MATTER-SYMMETRIC COSMOLOGIES*

It seems aesthetically pleasing to posit that the universe



began with equal amounts of matter and antimatter. An immediate difficulty with such a symmetric universe is that, during early times ($t \sim 10^{-3}$ seconds) the matter density is so high that matter-antimatter annihilation occurs, creating photons, until the temperature of the universe falls below 10^{11} degrees Kelvin. At this point the annihilation rate becomes small and few nucleon-antinucleon pairs collide thereafter. So many annihilations have occurred by this time, though, that the photon density n^* will be high relative to the matter density n . Simple calculations show that the matter we see today must be leftovers from the original, hot era of the universe, but the night sky would then be "filled with photons"--i.e., too bright and hot. To remedy this discrepancy, one conventionally legislates an asymmetric universe with a small fractional excess of matter. These surviving nucleons comprise our universe. But is this assumption necessary?

((later: published in *Astronomy & Astrophysics*))

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MARCH, 1976: COSMIC GOSSIP

The Beyond This Here Horizon sf lecture/class series is nearly finished at Irvine, and hoo boy will I be glad when it is. The thing took an immense amount of time for reading, and its main reward was having interesting folk down to eat and yammer and do their top hat & cane act for the assembled hordes. Luckily--or maybe not, psychologically--the least popular speaker came early in the course--a futurologist named Goodman--and the best--Silverberg, Carr, Zelazny, Rotsler--came last. So we end on an upbeat. The most numbing revelations for me are:

(1) there are some sf fanatics who've read *everything*, even Perry Rodan, and consume 5 or 6 books a week--and they're not just teenagers; some are high school teachers;

(2) a sizable fraction of high school & grammar school teachers have a mere brushing acquaintance with the English language. We had one physical education, plus mathematics type (a curious combination, what?) from a Huntington Beach High, who complained bitterly in barely readable prose that he didn't like all this thought-heavy stuff anyway and he read stories 'cause he liked to just you know sorta *enjoy* the stuff, not analyze it to death like he'd had to do in college before, so why did we keep asking him to do so much bullshit about themes and characters and all that? He dropped out after he got a D on the midterm ("You can't give me a D, I already have a B.A.!" "You do?" "Sure, an'--" "Well then, considering, I'll give you an F.").

Next week, two litcrit types (of a sort...), McNelly & Bruce McAllister, come and analyze *If the Stars Are Gods* by our old favorites, Eklund & Benford. McNelly said to me over the phone that he detected the subtle Swift allusions in the work. "Swift who?" I said. Was it Bob Tucker who said, "Piss on critics and leave them for dead--first rule of the writer."?

Something in me would rather write than read, but then, I'd rather talk than listen, too, so.... My remark last January on being fair done with the writerbiz for the foreseeable was (a) premature and (b) not a "I'm leaving, I'm leaving, you ungrateful slob and lowbrows!" declaration. The next week, inspired by the numbing scenarios which we'd had the Beyond This Horizon class do for a midterm exam (views of a low-energy future), I sat down and rattled a 2000 word story out in 2 hours, out of sheer frustration at what I thought were thick-witted student efforts; put it in the mail immediately; got a letter & contract back from Terry in 4 days; and felt as though I'd at least gotten something out of the course. Quick ejaculations can be fun, too.

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APRIL, 1976: I had a discussion with Scott Edelstein on writing, after he wrote to request reprint rights for some stories, and in the midst of it I was reading various bits of literary criticism to try and focus on some novel problems I was having. But, finally, I think the attempt failed. I can't distance myself from my own work by slipping on some miraculous goggles. Only time does the job; just let the ms. sit. (Ah, yes,



ms. How easily a useful abbreviation for manuscript has been corrupted...) I wonder if you can ever intelligently discuss any successful artwork. To talk about it you have to take it apart and hold one piece after another up to the light, turning it for refractions to strike the eye. But in any reasonably dense work, everything is so connected with every other element that to extract one bit means having to talk about its relationship to the other bits, and *bang* you've written a five-volume critical study of the first sentence of HUCK FINN. Maybe if I'd ever taken a single English course in University I'd feel differently, but instead I took the two required semesters by "challenge examination"--which saved several hundred dollars--and never heard the discouraging word of cut and slice and dissect. To examine any writing is to box it in, ultimately, and perhaps even to demean it. If a story truly could be summarized, the summary would be a more successful work, *if* it were really about the same things... But, of course, this doesn't mean analysis is worthless to everybody. Dave Samuelson's study of the Eklund-Benford novelette, *If the Stars Are Gods*, which I've seen in ms., clearly shows that he can fish out connections I knew were there--and in fact labored to put in, half-knowing what I was after--and will probably help some people understand the several layers that are in it, and the point of the ambiguity, of Reynolds' changings sense of the aliens, and of that quote that took me two weeks of muzzy-minded searching after to find:

A dog cannot be a hypocrite, but neither can he be sincere.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

I guess the point I'm shuffling toward here is that criticism is useful for readers, but probably not writers, when they're working.

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Some March-April titles:

ION CYCLOTRON WAVES: HEATING EFFECTS, NONLINEAR FREQUENCY SHIFTS AND LINEWIDTHS ((*Journal of Plasma Physics*))

A GENERAL THEORY OF COHERENT RADIATION ((*Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*))

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Short story (of sorts): *Calibrations and Exercises*

1. Alpha awakens 18 minutes earlier than usual. He nudges Beta up from her muzzy slumber. They make love, selfcritically. So it begins.

Another one (why can't I give up writing short stories and fling myself into novels totally? Oh well): *Nooncoming*

Saturday night, and they straggled into the cramped bar on Eucalyptus Boulevard. They nudged through the crowd and found friends, these aging people, ordered drinks, watched the crystal clouds at the ceiling form lurid, fleshy stories. But the best tales were the ones they told each other.

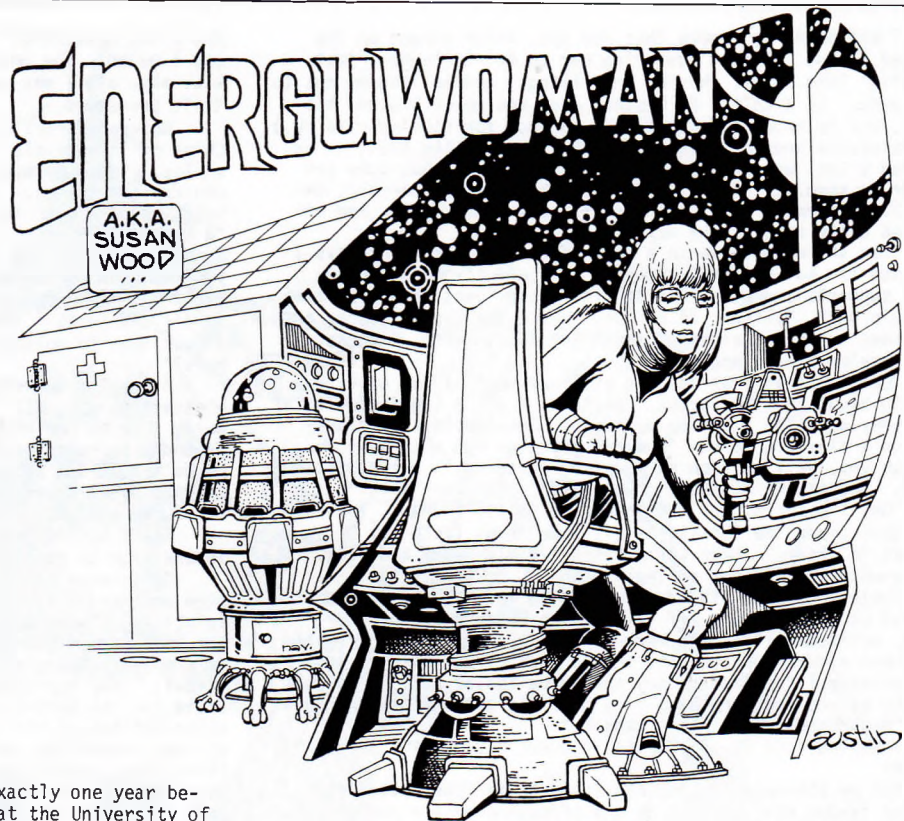
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April, and Nebulas once more in the courtyard bloom. Annual meeting in LA this year. I went, I saw, I lost. And expected to: basically, the process is highly stochastic. And though I think *Doing Lennon* and *White Creatures* are among my best stuff, there are plenty of other good writers. And anyway, it's the process of writing that I enjoy, not the rewards. Awards are nice, but I get more of a kick from finishing a piece that I think is good, than from getting a check in the mail when somebody buys it. And there is that small pleasure when, say, the July F&SF arrives--as it will, soon now--and there's the Benford-Eklund novella, *The Anvil of Jove*, and you get to see what Sternbach picked to illustrate from it for the cover. In a way, I suppose that's a very specific form of feedback, the artist reacting through his imagination to whatever the writer has done. Now, *that's* fun.

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Money-making scheme: SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS ANONYMOUS. Every time you are possessed by the urge to write, Barry Malzberg calls you up and talks you out of it, reads you a poem about Gernsback, and then you drink three martinis, very dry, very fast. This cure *always* works.

-- Gregory Benford / May 15, 1976



TUESDAY SHOULD HAVE BEEN Celebration Day. Exactly one year before, I had been offered my Ideal Job, here at the University of British Columbia. To help me feel joyful, spring arrived. Sun gleamed off the Coast Mountains at the bottom of my street, glittered on the clear blue water of English Bay, caressed the opening buds of rhododendrons and cherry blossoms. People grinned at me as I bounced around my classes, handed a bunch of cherry-blossom twigs to our secretaries, and bounced home.

To celebrate?

No, to go to the dentist for double root canal work.

ROOT CANAL WORK? *Celebration?* Oh, my Ghod!

That's what I thought, until it started. I'm a terrible coward about dentists, but...

Now wait a minute, before you get all burbly and neofannish about the blood and gore! (They sure make nitrous oxide strong these days...)

I had a 45-minute bus ride home, and I'm down nicely, thank you. And it STILL doesn't hurt. That's what I wanna tell you, you see...

Ahem! To repeat, before you get all burbly about the blood and gore of your revolting private tooth traumas (yech!) just what does all this have to do with a science fiction fanzine?

That's what I'm trying to tell you! The whole experience was one part fantasy--at last, a real painless dentist--and two parts science fiction, with an eminently sane scientist and his nubile assistants working away on my cavities with an amazing array of futuristic scientific gadgetry. Honest, it was like a set for a Gene Rodenberry movie--but for real. And it still didn't hurt!

Root canal work that doesn't hurt? Ok: that's sf. Tell me more.

The story begins at least a year ago, when I noticed amidst my bouncings up and down and cries of glee that the UBC job offer carried not only a better salary, but the offer of BC socialized medicare (cheap) and government dental care (even cheaper: about \$3/month for 70% coverage). I KNEW I needed lots of work done, because the adult in me saying "Make a dentist's appointment" kept listening to the child whose bad teeth took her to Dr. Gallagher's office far too often for fillings and needles and...

*Yeah, the needles for freezing were the worst part. Then the nurse left you tied down and alone for 20 minutes while your face slowly got numb, and you could hear the drill whirring in the next room, and some other kid moaning and gurgling, and you got scarer, and the dentist came back in with his little pick and his big drill, and *zowie* you weren't frozen, but he drilled anyway.*

Yeah. Oh, I had a couple of fillings after my mother stopped making those six-monthly appointments. In fact, in Saskatchewan, I had dental surgery, when a badly impacted wisdom tooth started acting up. The dentist had to take out part of the jawbone, and everything. Actually, it wasn't too bad--he played with all sorts of fancy gadgets, not just that old immense drill with the

water control lever he gave you to hang onto 'cause you were scared. The dentist's nurse and I gossiped merrily about the divorce of mutual friends (Regina was a small town!). I did notice that the local anesthetic worked fast, and completely. Didn't feel a thing, just noticed a horrible grating sound as he sawed the bone... In fact, the panic was all from a teeny-bopper critter, all plastic hair, plastic eyelashes and plastic sandals, chewing gum and reading *True Romances* in the waiting room. The nurse said "Here's your sedative, Susan, for the local" and the poor girl yelled "Sedative? *Sedative?* Is it *that* bad?" and fled.

As for me, I sailed merrily out into the sunset, the freezing evaporated, I nearly collapsed in Victoria Park at the feet of Sir John A. Macdonald's statue, and spent three horrible days bleeding all over my pillow, crying with pain while Eli tried to comfort me, and swallowing 292's. The other funny part of the experience was that the kids two floors below had a drunken party, bashed out their picture window, panicked, and tried to pretend there'd been a break-in instead. The nice blond young policeman just stared at me strangely when I tried to explain that I'd only noticed 'a little noise', without explaining that I'd been doped out of my gourd and just wanted to go back to bed again.

So you're scared of dentists, like all the rest of us?

Right! Yet my left lower molar ached like crazy. I asked local fan Rick Mikkelsen, who'd just had extensive dental work done, and he recommended Dr. Robert Forrest as good, efficient, and relatively cheap. Emphasis on the 'relatively'. "There's only one problem," Rick added, "the power in his office keeps going off, especially when you're in the chair half-drilled!"

Finally I took my jello-filled knees and attached molar into the Georgia St. Medical Building. Now for the sf part! Sunlight lit up bright, interconnected offices full of Mysterious Gadgetry, but also full of swirling mobiles, plants, and posters plastered on the ceiling. The local fm/easy listening station bounced through big speakers. No-one was around but a pleasant-looking young man finishing a sandwich, who said: "Hi, you must be Susan, I'm Dr. Forrest." (I resisted the urge to snap "That's Dr. Wood" because, unlike The Average Doctor, he was not being patronizing and tin-god-like.) "If you'll give me your dental card, and fill out this form--we have to know if you've got any allergies, stuff like that--we'll show you how to avoid visiting me."

As he finished his sandwich, a pretty young woman in yellow appeared. "Hi, Susan, I'm Susan, your dental technician." She spent an hour and a half giving me a crash course in dental hygiene, in her gadget-strewn office. She painted my teeth with red dye. She probed exotic instruments gently into my gums, and chatted about gum care and UBC classes. She gave me a new, soft toothbrush and a bitty dentist's mirror, and showed me how to go brusha-brush, and make with the dental floss more efficiently

than I had been, to remove that red dye, which showed up The Dreaded Plaque. I kept comparing her to Dr. Gallagher, just a-fillin' them holes, shoving in fillings, and telling me not to eat candy. (I didn't. My brother did, and never brushed his teeth, and he *never* had cavities. So much for sibling rivalry.) Brusha-brusha-brusha. "That's right, yes, *up* like that, we've learned a lot, we can even do tooth transplants, but gums are harder to save..." I would've felt like a three-year-old, except Susan treated me like an intelligent human being, and explained every step of the way.

Then she wrapped me in a lead apron. One or two x-rays I was used to, but not this array of rays and chrome jaw-open-wider supports and plastic filmholders and "just shut your eyes for this one", *click*: 24 x-rays. Which she brought back, and explained to me. Insides of teeth are fascinating, I guess, when they're other people's.

"Let's see if that molar's still alive." I was expecting the old blunt pick and probe. Instead, I got a light coating of some grey metallic stuff on my tooth. Susan held a long grey wand on a flexible wire. "Now I'm going to run a current through you, yell as soon as you feel anything." She adjusted dials. Red lights blinked. "Open wide"--tingle--*zowch*

"Oh, I'm sorry, but you should've yelled sooner. You ok? I'll just clean the tea stains off your front teeth til Dr. Forrest is ready." Over Carly Simon I dimly heard a drill, whirra-whirra. But not a single moan.

Another office. The doctor studied the x-rays. The doctor, instead of just reeling off latin names to a co-conspirator nurse, pointed to "filling here--and here, they're both cracked and there's decay underneath, that's bad" (I silently cursed Dr. Gallagher) "and let me try the probe again, be sure to yell as soon as you feel anything." I did. And got the dreaded word: "Root canal work! Five canals."

I smiled into Dr. Forrest's innocent blue eyes. "Fiend!" I thought.

But my pineapple-jello legs (used to be lime, but that's another fadom now) brought in the offending molars on celebration day.

I had bought the new Dylan album on sale, but felt not a twinge of anticipation; just twinges. I had smiled at the flower sellers on Robson St., said "Happy Spring!" but felt no joy. I'd said "Hey, on your lunch break, go out and look at the mountains!" to the postoffice clerk, but felt no uplift. I did, however, feel Virtuous, having been brusha-brushing and flossing in 1976 approved style all week.

Dr. Forrest was finishing his coffee. "You're really afraid of dentists, aren't you?" he observed, profoundly. "Relax!" I explained to his assistant, Lynda, as she lowered my bod onto the turquoise comfy couch, that she'd have to let me sit up occasionally to breathe; I had a strep throat infection, and the mucus kept collecting in my throat. Sure enough, about every 15 minutes in the 1 1/2-hour procedure, the doctor stopped helped me to sit up to breathe, and explained something interesting. "See, Susan, we use these tiny metal pins, put them right down the canals to kill the nerve", or "Sorry this is so tedious, four of your canals are crooked." Fascinating.

Fascinating? I would've been screaming the building down!
Steel pins!

Sure. Very efficient, too. New ones for each patient, very thin, so they didn't get blunted like in the Bad Old Days. And it *was* interesting to participate in a scientific experiment, once I stopped shaking. Lynda saw me quivering, looked at Dr. F., and said: "Susan, how'd'ya like some nitrous oxide?"

"Uuuuhhhh, but..." I explained about asthma, and the time when I was five when I nearly choked to death at the dentist's.

"Oh, poor woman, but it isn't *like* that any more. It'll relax you, and we'll get Dierdre in here just to watch your breathing so you'll be ok."

Mask. Breathed in. Was patted on head, told to "relax, open wide"--metal braces, gently applied, prevented that jaw-cracking "open *wider*" irritated command we're all familiar with (once, from pure fear and muscle-reflex, I clamped *shut* on the Regina dentist's hand). Also made it easier to concentrate on breathing. I looked out at the mountains, trying to ignore The Needle. Deep blue sky, sun on snow, "Must be a lovely day for skiing or hiking" sighed Dr. F. as he slipped in the needle, and out again, and in again, and with just a couple of teeny twinges, my face was numb. "Yeah, in the summer let's take off two afternoons a week" suggested Dierdre, holding out a tiny rubber sheet. I raised an enquiring eyebrow. "Oh, this is something new, we section off the tooth so you can't get hurt if a drill slips, and we can see what's going on better, and we can suction off bits of old filling and stuff more easily. Wanna look?" Dr. Forrest handed me his mirror. "Now there, see, we have to drill out all those old fillings, and expose the nerves. It'll take about 3 minutes of drilling, be sure to yell if it hurts *at all*."

How's the breathing?" I nodded and gurgled. Susan walked by, and I waved. The mountains were a lovely grey-white against the blue sky, and I was really getting interested in all this scientific procedure.

Whirra whirra. Joni Mitchell carolled in the background. Chips of 15-year-old filling flew past my nose. I crossed my ankles, closed my eyes, and decided I really *liked* NO₂ and doctors who explain things. Soon I got to peer at my neatly-drilled holes and the pins for them. Fiddle, fiddle. Pressure. Fiddle. "A number 4, please, Lynda," and "Susan, could you hold your forefinger *there* so this film doesn't slip." Click. An interval of instrumental sounds while I watched an elevator descend the Hyatt hotel's exterior, and was allowed to breathe. "There! Here's the x-ray. There they are, five pins, all in place. Now, I just have to hollow out the cavity a little more. Did that hurt?"

I gurgled and shrugged. The only things I felt were a pleasant glow, a mild discomfort, and a distinct annoyance at not being able to contribute to the witty repartee going on amid the Friendly Forrest Staff, as they debated the merits of parking Lynda's soon-due baby in the bottom drawer of the new filing cabinet Dierdre was demanding. "And when it gets hungry and cries, we can *all* go home!"

I was having root canal work done, and all I felt was an insane urge to giggle. Was that sf, or fantasy?

Or science fact? I was having dental surgery performed by a team who, armed with the most modern technology, knew their skills--and, more important, treated me like a person. They were not high-priest-and-attendants engaged in some arcane rites over my prostrate, puzzled, painwracked form. None of that barbaric ritual. They explained, they held up mirrors and x-rays up so I could see the work-in-progress, they stopped every so often to relax and let us all look at the mountains. ("Sure, I could work all day, every day and make a lot of money, but I'd rather take time off to go hiking--and I do a better job if I'm not tired.") When was the last time your doctor or dentist explained procedures, made your body part of the team? Sf or fantasy? Why shouldn't it be fact?

Finally, Dr. Forrest inserted a temporary filling, Lynda took impressions for new crowns, and I was free. The only discomfort I had felt was tiny twinges from the needle and the insertion of the canal-filling plugs. ("Sorry. But that does mean we're in the right place.") The only *pain* I felt came when Dierdre handed me the bill, then snatched it back: "Oops, sorry, relax, that's the government's share!" Blow to the solar plexus, that one. Sure, it cost--plenty. Two visits so far, two more to come, and without medicare I would already have spent over three week's pay. Nevertheless, I'll pay for good service any day. I'll pay to avoid pain, sure! Besides, I got a crash course on what's inside my mouth--no dentist before ever kept me too interested to be scared!

I took the bus home, and used the right, or unfilled, side of my mouth to nibble mushy chili and toast. A slight discomfort, but I felt good enough to type out a rough draft of this piece, and writing, I assure you, is acute agony! Dr. F. had handed me a packet of 222's--which are legal over-the-counter in Canada--saying "I don't think you'll need these, but you may want them when the freezing goes." Eventually I took two, and conked out. Conked firmly, it appeared, since a certain hairy fan in Toronto was calling me longdistance and I never heard the phone--but it's at the back of the first story, and I sleep soundly at the front of the second story. The next day I taught a full load of Canadian literature classes, feeling a little stiff as to the jaw when I tried to smile and a little uncomfortable as to the temporary fillings when I tried to eat. Oh, I admit I used The Mystique of Illness to avoid marking the 97 tempapers which came in that day, so I could treat myself to several chapters of Kate Wilhelm's excellent WHERE LATE THE SWEET BIRDS SANG and an early rest. No vast agonies, though.

No pain? That is fantasy.

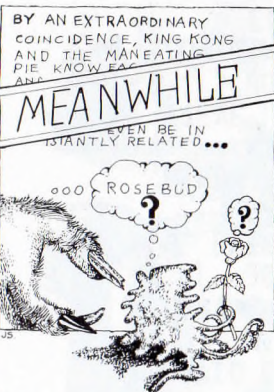
No, science fact. I draw several morals. If you live in British Columbia, invest in government dental coverage. Elsewhere, check out your college school of denistry--low rates so they can practise these fancy new techniques on you. Do it NOW--preventative dentistry is the thing, not rot and replacement of every tooth in your head, any more. At least buy some dental floss. Moral two, if you're in college and are at all science-minded, switch into dentistry; you'll make a fortune, and can take afternoons off to go hiking in the mountains. Most important: if you share my memories of fear and pain, forget 'em. Dentistry now is an exact and advanced science. Your dentist should be interested in you as a complete person, in your complete health, and should be teaching you techniques to keep you OUT of his/her office. And when he/she says "This won't hurt!"--it should be *true*.

If it isn't, switch dentists!

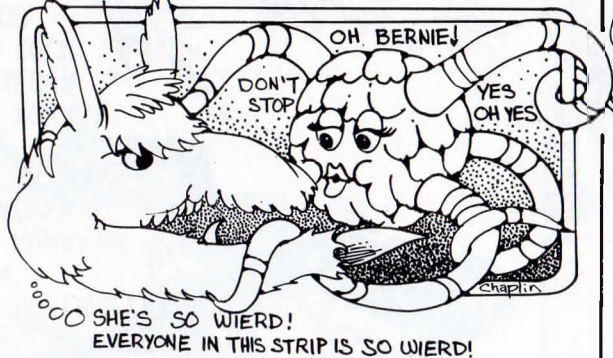
--- Susan Wood / Feb. 6, 1976

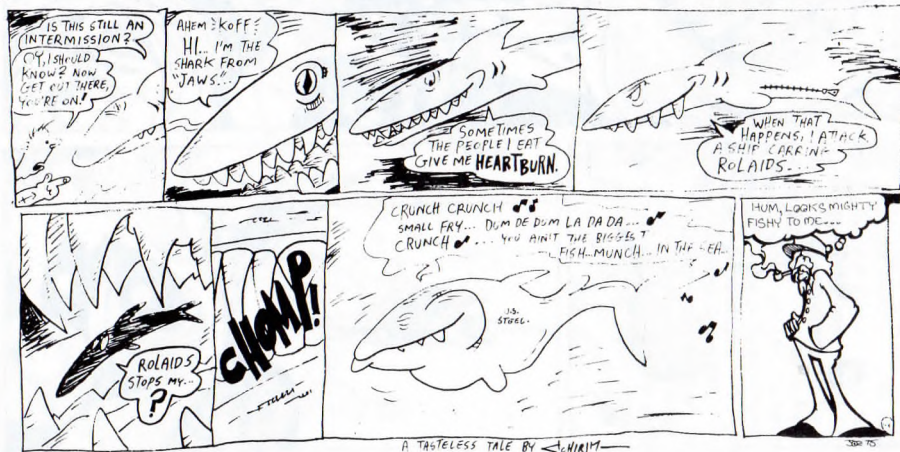
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LINDA MILLER
LUISE PERRIN
RODDY SMITH
CARL CHAPLIN
JAMES SHULL
JOHN D. BERRY
ALPAJPURI
BILL ROTSLER
CATHY HILL
DAVID GERROLD
MARC SCHIRMEISTER
GARY GREEN
JOHN HOWARTH
D. ENZENBACHER
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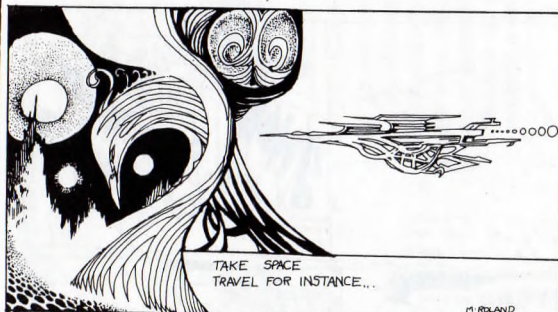
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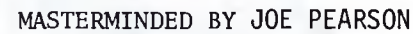
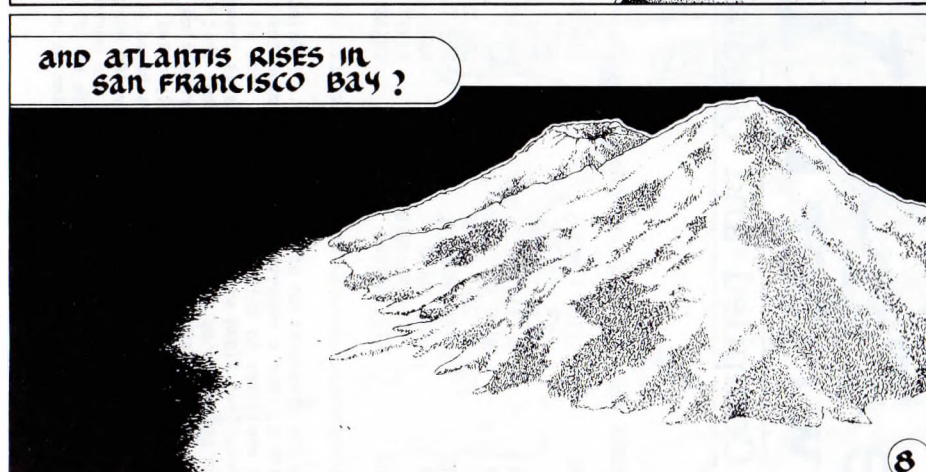


WE CAN'T GO ON MEETING LIKE THIS ROSEBUD!









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July 4-6, 1975
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Special Thanks to JIM SHULL

more than one way to skin a poll-cat, and further on you'll notice that two other questions are also ringers just like this one. This is known as overcoming the editorial handling of your material, but let's save that thought for when we discuss the responses to the fourth question.

The first two sections of the first question (what are the strengths and weaknesses of your own writing ability?) produced some interesting responses. A few fans came forth and claimed, as DAVE HULAN did, that: "It's hard to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of one's own writing." Absolutely. I never doubted it for a minute. This did not, however, prevent many fans (not even Dave) from valiantly taking a shot at it anyway. I believe, judging by the responses, that there indeed is an inability to pinpoint one's own strengths and weaknesses in writing and that it is quite widespread, at least amongst the fans who answered this question. Some seemed to hit the mark, but more often they weren't even on the board. I'll let you judge for yourselves, based on the following introspections:

MIKE SHOEMAKER: strengths - "My style is extremely compressed and I feel comfortable with it. This is especially suitable to dramatic, personal expositions." weaknesses - "I have a tendency to overstate my enthusiasms." ERIC MAYER: strengths - "My sense of organization. I'd like to think that everything I write has a beginning, a middle, and an end." weaknesses - "My basic weakness is stylistic. I just can't seem to find a suitable style." PAUL WALKER: strengths - "I think most of what I've written in fanzines has been intelligent, interesting, amusing, and entertaining." weaknesses - "Inadequately thought out, and perhaps distinguished by its lack of ambitiousness." DON D'AMASSA: strengths - "I'm more widely read both inside the field and out of it, than the great majority of readers." weaknesses - "The greatest difficulty I have is in writing the beginning and the ending of articles, so I suspect they're the weakest part." BOB TUCKER: strengths - "I try to construct a given piece of fan writing in the same form as professional writing: some kind of narrative hook at the beginning, followed by whatever background material is necessary to establish the theme, and then build up to an ending which will be satisfactory to me and the reader. I find myself doing this almost unconsciously, as if I were writing for pro submission." weaknesses - "The strained humor and the humor that misses completely. I also run on too long." JODIE OFFUTT: strengths - "Its brevity, its lightweight subject matter and its conversational tone." weaknesses - "I find it hard to write about anything serious, or to write seriously. Maybe I think I don't have anything to say and if I do, I incorporate it in humor. It could be that I don't take fandom too seriously, since I think of it as a hobby, therefore my fanwriting is funwriting." MIKE GLICKSOHN: strengths & weaknesses - "My greatest hurdle to becoming a good writer is my inability to know what to write about. When I do get an idea, I think I can write light humorous material with sufficient skill to amuse casual readers." LOREN MacGREGOR: strengths - "Maintaining an informal style." weaknesses - "When I want to make an important (to me) point, I end up shifting to the other side of the spectrum. Suddenly I become an extremely pretentious writer, putting everything in accents of doom and gloom." GREGG CALKINS: strengths - "I write directly, straight-forwardly, without pretense." weaknesses - "I often get tangled up with purple prose. This is because I always write with great belief in what I write, and generally get carried away. I try to overcome it by re-writing." D. GARY GRADY: strengths - "My basic ideas. At least I manage to come up with subjects that fascinate me." weaknesses - "Have made statements without verifying them first." SHERYL SMITH: strengths - "I try to write sercon that communicates my feelings about a work as well as my thoughts." weaknesses - "When I'm on, I'm on; when I'm not, and write anyway, I get stilted." ROY TACKETT: strengths - "The ability to keep the reader guessing, or wondering, or confused." weaknesses - "I am unable to be expansive on a subject. While another writer can take a given subject and go on at length I usually find that I've said all I have or want to say in a couple of paragraphs. This may be getting to the heart of the matter but it seldom makes interesting reading." DONN BRAZIER: strengths & weaknesses - "I attempt to be concise, colorful, and personal. I'm after stark clarity, but this is a strength that some would argue as a weakness, saying that adequate development is lacking." DEAN GREENELL: strengths - "The ability to beguile the eye of the casual browser and not let it go until the end is reached." weaknesses - "I sometimes operate typewriters while under the influence of strong drink and do not always manage to prune out the more obvious effects of this before posting the result off to some hapless publisher." HARRY WARNER: strengths - "The force of habit which forces me to turn out LoCs, FAPA publications, and occasional fanzine contributions almost automatically." weaknesses - "Mainly the stodgy, convoluted style in which I write." SANDRA MIESEL: strengths - "Colorful, precise, and informative." weaknesses - "Excessively formal and wrathful." BUCK COULSON says

he has "a good eye for the idiocies of life, such as fan polls."

The last two parts of the first question (what is the greatest weakness of fanwriting in general, and what steps do you take to overcome it in your own writing?) produced a wealth of information on fanwriting weaknesses but a dearth on the subject of incident prevention (I expected at least *one* fan would put on a straight face and say: "I try not to do that."). In general, however, those who responded at all on the matter of what they do to prevent creeping weaknesses said that rewriting is the best tool. Most people also said they don't rewrite. And, strangely enough, the overwhelming consensus as to the major weakness of fanwriting is that most of it is first draft.

DON D'AMASSA: "The greatest advantage is that it is unstructured. You can write about anything under the sun, any writing style imaginable, and get it published, even if you have to publish it yourself. The greatest weakness of fanwriting is that it is very often superficial, unpolished, poorly thought out in advance."

ED COX: "Sloppy."

MIKE GLICKSOHN: "The greatest weakness of fanwriting in general is that far too many fanwriters are *bad* writers, mostly because they lack the basic skills of grammar and the ability to write interesting sentences. The worst sin of a bad writer is to write in a boring manner; regardless of *what* is being written about, style is still possibly the most important aspect of any piece of written material. In my own writing I try for a pleasing style: It's limited, I know, but I hope my writing isn't quite common enough for it to become too commonplace."

DON AYRES: "I probably could produce a better product if I gave it the benefit of a revision, but I wonder if there would be much difference in the long run."

SUSAN WOOD: "Who's going to rewrite a piece that's written for fun in your spare time, and designed to be skimmed over late at night by a tired fan?"

DAVE HULAN: "The additional effort required to turn out material that's outside the informal mode of writing (using your quinquipartite division of fanwriting into scholarly, serious, informal, light, and humorous) produces negligible additional egoboo, and since egoboo is the sole coin with which fanwriting is repaid, there's no incentive to do more. There are a few dedicated craftsmanlike souls who'll actually expend a good deal of effort on their writing just for the personal satisfaction they get out of it, and there are a few geniuses who can turn out highly polished material without working on it very hard (or so it seems--maybe they're just dedicated craftsmen who carefully conceal the traces of the work they put into it), but the majority of fanwriters seem to share my outlook--write what you know will get the most egoboo for the effort, and don't bother with much more."

While most seem to go along with the belief that first-draft is both a weakness and a way of life, there are a few other charges about the makeup of fanwriting.

GREG BENFORD: "The prime weakness of fanwriting for most nonfans must be its ingroup feel. Conversely, this is what gives it such appeal to fans; it *is* well done, and it has the special references and attitudes that all people relish, when they're intelligible."

JACKIE FRANKE: "Fanwriters, in general, tend to direct their comments to a restricted "in" group, which often results in the abuse of jargon ("fanspeak") and loss of comprehension to the neo or general audience who may read the material."

BOB TUCKER: "The greatest weakness of general fanwriting is the failure of the writer to organize his piece, to ramble in a dull manner and to jump from thought to thought, or subject to subject without a satisfactory bridge to take him there. As much as I like personal zines where the editor fills many, many pages of his own magazine, I shudder everytime a neophyte writer-editor tries it. Verbosity and dullness are the weaknesses."

BUCK COULSON: "It isn't professional."

ERIC MAYER: "I might point out such things as lack of organization and also a lack of imagination. But in doing so I'd be comparing fanwriting to professional writing--which isn't really fair. The purposes of the two are different. Professional writing has as its goal one way communication. A novel might

stimulate a reader's mind but the author rarely gets to hear the reader's thoughts. Fanwriting, generally speaking, has as its goal two way communication. And it achieves this goal better than any other form of writing I've ever seen. I would like to see more imaginative pieces of fanwriting--more fully worked out articles, new formats, instead of the usual diet of con reports, personal diaries, etc. But, and this is a big but, I would hate to see fandom turn into just another boring, ego ridden, amateur writers' group. But there could be some improvement. Intensely personal, autobiographical writing has great possibilities. I wouldn't mind at all if more fans tried to organize their experiences into longer works. Fanwriters are just not daring enough. I'd rather see more people failing with originality than failing in vain attempts to copy accepted styles."

JOHN FOYSTER: "Egocentricity is the greatest weakness of fanwriting, but why be modest?"

DEAN GREENNELL: "One of the more salient weaknesses of fanwriting in general (including my own) is that they let words such as 'salient' creep in when 'worst' would have served as well and would have been more familiar to the reader. This is known as writing to impress, rather than express and it is not the best of things."

HARRY WARNER: "I think the greatest weakness of fanwriting in general is the scanty output by the best fanwriters, compared with the situation a while back when the best writers were among the most prolific."

DONN BRAZIER: "Most fanwriting is not terse. Pruning shears are needed. Allied to this lack of close-cropped writing is a tendency to be not only long-winded but pretentious."

LEIGH EDMONDS: "The greatest weakness is that fans seem to take themselves far too seriously and write as though what they had to say is really important. On odd occasions the subject matter may warrant this sort of treatment, but highly inflated prose about virtually nothing is almost so funny it is worth laughing over..."

ROY TACKETT: "Triviality--most of it has no substance at all. I suppose that is built-in by the nature of our basic subjects: stf and fandom. But a great deal of it can be put directly on the fannish writers who seem incapable of dealing with any subject of depth."

LOREN MacGREGOR: "The feeling that you have to be either Serious and Constructive or Fannish and Frivolous. Fannish writers tend to fall into the trap of using throwaway lines and slogans, and--although it truly is a wonderful thing--it sometimes works to the detriment of their writing. And sercon writers sometimes write as though a sense of humor was one of the trials of Job."

The remaining segment of response is by those fans who use the question as a vehicle to express their pet peeves on the subject matter which fanwriting can deal with.

SANDRA MIESEL: "Beds, beverages, and blather."

SHERYL SMITH: "There are too many people writing tedious travelogues and enervating accounts of their daily lives--worse, there are editors who are printing them."

PAUL WALKER: "The greatest weakness of fanwriting, in general, is that so much of it isn't really about anything. Most of the humor I've seen is moronic; the editorials are all about the editor and his mimeo ink; the articles are about his or her mortal struggles with the post office, or his or her trip to the seashore, or 'How I came to read science fiction'. The con reports are largely about bus rides and plane trips and checking into the hotel and meeting people I have no interest in. The reviews, with few exceptions, are worthless. The local, with a few notable exceptions, are boring, but most always 100% better than the rest of the zine."

So what did we learn from the question? We found that it's tough to judge the strengths and weaknesses of your own writing ability. We found that fanwriting could use rewriting, but that rewriting doesn't lay enough egoboo on the soul to make it overly worthwhile (the value of egoboo will be dealt with in the next question, so stay tuned). Fans are apparently not diverse enough in their choice of subject matter, and the subject matter they use is considered overworked and/or trivial. Eric Mayer's point about originality seems to stand out, and is buttressed by the feelings of the other respondents. Also, fanwriters seem to lack depth when writing on any subject, and this would seem to follow if fans do not organize, research, and rewrite.

My own feeling is that fans want to have written, but they

don't want to write. If volume gives more egoboo than craftsmanship, we lose the incentive to buckle down and apply discipline to our writing efforts.

We are hacks. Some of us are good hacks, and our first drafts can be better than a mediocre writer's fourth draft, but we are still hacks. Professional writers encounter the same general problem: where to draw the line between writing in volume for money and writing with quality for prestige. Substitute 'egoboo' for 'money', and you have fandom. But there are proportionately more hacks in fandom than in professional writing, because it's the lack of professional status that generates the lack of professional treatment given one's material.

THE SECOND QUESTION:

"What is your prime motivation for fanwriting, and why are you not directing your non-fiction writing skills toward a paying market?"

A two-part question. In response to the subject of motivation, the words "egoboo" and "fun" were encountered with equally heavy frequency followed not too distantly by the word "communication".

ED CAGLE: "I do fanwriting because I get an occasional chuckle out of it."

MIKE SHOEMAKER: "Two-way communication. I want to stimulate ideas, and be stimulated in return. I want a give and take sharing of experiences."

DON D'AMMASSA: "I write primarily for my own satisfaction, and most of the egoboo derives from a sense of accomplishment. Feedback from readers is gravy, as are the free copies of fanzines."

ED COX: "The personal enjoyment I derive from writing whatever it is I write at that particular time."

SUSAN WOOD: "A compulsion to write, and I AM trying to write for paying markets."

D. GARY GRADY: "Where else but fandom can I write opinionated stuff on subjects I know nothing about? Other than for *Ramparts* and the *New Republic*, I mean. All my fan articles are things I want to write but could probably not get published elsewhere."

ALEXIS GILLILAND: "Writing is an amusement and solace."

MILT STEVENS: "Coming up with good lines gives me a pleasant electrical jolt in my brain, so I keep doing it."

BOB TUCKER: "My motive is fun, pure fun. I write the pro stuff for fun and money, but the fan stuff for the rich enjoyment of it."

JOHN FOYSTER: "If I do any fanwriting then the immediate cause is usually someone badgering me for a contribution. More generally, I like fans, and because I live in Australia writing is just about the only reasonable mode of contact."

DEAN GREENNELL: "The reason I write for fanzines is that it gives me a chance to work off a lot of stuff the commercial outlets wouldn't touch with a pole nine feet, fourteen inches in length. I enjoy watching the words drip off the typer and the stuff that fanzines will print tend to be more fun to write; imho."

SANDRA MIESEL: "There are still plenty of things I want to say that no one would pay to hear."

SHERYL SMITH: "An inability to shut up about Art."

PAUL WALKER: "The pleasure of seeing my stuff in print, the pleasure of writing itself for people who take pleasure in what I write. Fun, first, last, and always."

ROY TACKETT: "There are a whole lot of people in fandom I want to keep in touch with and I find it impossible to do this on a person-to-person basis."

DONN BRAZIER: "I know the audience and the audience knows me; I am not writing for strangers who don't give a damn who I am. My fan friends know when I'm being serious and when I'm being facetious, and they refer to me as myself--like, that was rather clever, Brazier, not, that was a clever piece by someone there on page 14-16."

LON ATKINS: "I indulge in fanwriting because I enjoy playing with words and this is a relaxing way to do that."

The last part of the question (why are you not directing your non-fiction writing skills toward a paying market?) brought some interesting responses. A number of fans do write non-fiction for professional markets (Dean Grennell, for example, besides being the Managing Editor of *Gun World*, is a big-name article writer in the firearms and handloading field), regardless of whether or not it is a normal publishing market (Alexis Gilliland writes federal specifications and I used to write business communications, for two examples). But the question, obviously, was for the purpose of feeling out those fanwriters who do not intend writing non-fiction for a paying market.

DAVE HULAN: "Professional writing would get me less of both my objectives. Having to spend more time on each subject, I would write less, and having little contact with readers, I'd get less ego boo."

PAUL WALKER: "I have yet to find one that will pay me. If I could find one that would pay me for reviewing books, I'd do that rather than write fiction."

DON AYRES: "Laziness. The topics which interest me seem not to interest professional editors, or are inspired by them so they're not going to be eager for a rehash of what they just published."

LOREN MacGREGOR: "Since most of my writing is of a personal nature, I am somewhat reluctant to expose myself in public to a lot of strangers. For one thing, I might get arrested."

MIKE GLICKSOHN: "I have very serious doubts that I have the ability to write anything that is worth money. The problem lies in a lack of ideas. I've nothing to say, and while fanzines might be willing to publish entertaining scribbles about nothing, the paying markets are (on occasions) more demanding."

GREGG CALKINS: "If I wrote for pay I would have to become more structured."

ED CAGLE: "I don't write for pay because the pay is bad and it'll drive you nuts."

ROY TACKETT: "Professional writing is a highly competitive field and takes more skills than I can muster."

ERIC MAYER: "The question is worded in such a way it's almost as if you think any of us who tried to sell professionally could do so..."

Didn't mean to imply that we all could make it, Eric, but I was curious about the reasons why we might avoid trying. I tend to feel that a lack of discipline in fanish writing molds us into being uncomfortable with the thought of trying to muster up a professional approach to gain a professional sale. People who like to sit around the house in their underwear are not usually the type who like to "dress up" when they go out, and consequently they try to avoid going anyplace where they would have to be dressed up.

THE THIRD QUESTION:

"How selective do you tend to be in placing your material?"

Out of 30 respondents, 23 confessed to being quite selective. They write only for friends and a selected few fanzines which highly appeal to them, or their output is not large enough to satisfy all requests and they are forced to be selective in their placements.

Those who are not overly selective had this to say:

MIKE SHOEMAKER: "I regard it as an act of friendship, sort of 'I like you, I like your zine, I would like to participate.' Some articles arise from something in a previous issue and so there is no question of where to send it."

LEIGH EDMONDS: "If someone writes to me and asks me to write an article about something that interests me I will generally send them something on that subject."

DON AYRES: "I mostly do articles or reviews because the right person asks about the right topic at the right time."

DON D'AMMASSA: "Generally, articles are sent out on a first come, first served basis. Occasionally, a faned will ask for an article on a specific subject, and if the subject matter sounds interesting and there is sufficient available time in my schedule, I write to his request. Otherwise, I turn out material on subjects that interest me, and send them to whoever seems interested."

JODIE OFFUTT: "If something in a fanzine turns me on to writing, I send the product to that zine. I tend to send material to editors who I think will print it within the next six or so months, and to faneds whose repro is pretty readable."

BRUCE ARTHURS: "When and if the piece is finished, I'll sit back and think, 'Now which fanzines would this fit into and which one do I owe a contrib to most?' There are numerous other factors, of course: Is the fanzine printed legibly? Does the editor have a reputation for ripping manuscripts to shreds? Does the fanzine come out more often than once every eight years? But the major factors are whether the piece suits the personality of a fanzine and whether I *want* to contribute to that fanzine."

HARRY WARNER: "Who gets the independent articles and columns depends solely on who asks me for something with a subject suggestion that interests me, or who requests material at a moment when I happen to feel the urge to write something for a fanzine."

There is a common thread here that bears closer attention. Sending a suggested topic or three, whenever you are putting the bite on a fanwriter, might be a more productive strategy than a blind solicitation wherein you leave the fanwriter to his own devices. I've never had good luck with suggested topics (although that fact in itself caused me to create an article...), but others appear to like them. It can't hurt, and suggesting a topic might possibly be the straw that breaks the fanwriter's back.

THE FOURTH QUESTION:

"Do you ever place restrictions upon the editorial handling of your material? If so, what? If you generally do not, but were suddenly overwhelmed with the idea of doing so, what would those restrictions be?"

As a longtime advocate and practitioner of the belief that it is an editor's job to edit (an editor who does not edit is not an editor, they are an assembler; it's the difference between a manager and a clerk), I put forth this question with every expectation that the great bulk of the respondents would rip off their facemasks and I would find myself confronting a pallor of prima donnas.

I will have to cut about two feet off the level of my cynicism, because only three people out of thirty said that they would not allow any editing of their material. Some of the others indicated that they would naturally wish to be consulted if any major rework was considered necessary, and a few wanted a pre-publication look at changes other than spelling, punctuation, and grammar, but the general feeling is that an editor who knows his own limitations can only improve, not hurt, the value of a manuscript.

ERIC MAYER: "If I submit something to an editor it means I respect his abilities as an editor and trust him to handle whatever I send him in the best possible manner."

LEIGH EDMONDS: "Once an editor gets whatever it is I've written they are free to do with it what they will. I'm a very trusting soul and faneds are usually sensible people, so why worry about it that much?"

DON AYRES: "I don't mind editing so long as the editor is creative about it to preserve original flavor; he knows he's succeeded when the writer runs back to the original to see if he came up with that phrase which delights him so now."

BOB TUCKER: "I always invite editors to edit where they think necessary."

ED COX: "If I misspell words or let a run-on sentence or two slip by, I'd expect the editor to edit them."

DEAN GRENELL: "I have no objection to reasonable editing. If I botch the spelling of a word and the editor corrects it, I'm grateful; especially if he corrects it to a form sanctioned by Webster. The same goes for sentence structure, punctuation and the like. I write first draft and ship it off, nearly always, with no more than minor corrections in pencil. If I were to write cliché, when cliché was the word I had in mind (as Harlan Ellison once did, referring to 'a small cliché of fans'), I would take it as a favor to have the mess cleaned up."

SANDRA MIESEL: "All I ask is that editors give my material neat and legible treatment. It also helps if they correct spelling errors and such rather than tamely reproducing them."

SUSAN WOOD: "One of the main problems of fanwriting is, strangely enough, a lack of real feedback. People will say 'gee, I liked that piece,' or 'that stank' or will be prompted to write about similar experiences, or (in a serious article) will go off on long discussions about the Babylonian empire or whatever; but I get very little feedback on style, method of writing, what could be done to improve the article. The response is all content-oriented. And I have, to my regret, never had an editor suggest rewrites, though occasionally Michael would ask me not to write such long pieces for *Energumen*. Editors don't edit, in fandom, they just assemble material!"

BUCK COULSON: "Trying to restrict faneditors is more idiotic than being one."

ED CAGLE: "The only thing I don't like is having my obscenities edited out and the piece submitted to *The Christian Science Monitor*."

And now a few words from those three fen who feel their words are too sacred for the laying-on of human hands.

GREG BENFORD: "No editing without my approval."

MIKE SHOEMAKER: "I expect my material to be published intact exactly as I write it."

PAUL WALKER: "I am a troublemaker. Ask anyone I've written for regularly. I throw tantrums everytime they tamper with my stuff. I take my fanwriting too seriously which is how all good writing must be taken. What I write is planned as best I can to create a certain effect, and effects are delicate things, easily destroyed by a carelessly deleted paragraph or typo. If an editor improves my piece, I tell him or her so. It has happened. Once in 1968, it was. All the other times they fucked up the whole thing, and I told them so. Never, ever, trust to the wisdom of editors. They are the enemy--even if you love them. They stand between the writer and the reader, a barricade to be stormed and surmounted."

What Paul said, before I edited his response, was: "what I write is planned is as best as I am able to create a certain effect," and "all the others times, the fucked up the whole thing."

I have enjoyed much that these three fanwriters have offered up for fannish consumption, but it is foolish to believe that you always paint with an infallible stroke or that the editor is stereotypically incapable of cleaning your brushes. The editor may occasionally stand between the writer and the reader, to wipe a smudge off the glass so they may see each other more clearly.

THE FIFTH QUESTION:

"Certain types of articles tend to receive more comment than others. Do you have a tendency to tailor your material with the idea in mind of receiving feedback, or does this not influence you at all?"

22 answered "No". 4 said "yes" (ROY TACKETT: "Sure I do. I'm a button pusher. I like to stir people up and watch their reactions."), 3 said "sometimes", and JOHN FOYSTER said: "unconsciously, but not otherwise."

THE SIXTH QUESTION:

"How do you view the seldom-encountered practice of an editor sending you excerpts of unpublished letters which comment upon your material?"

With the exception of Leigh Edmonds, who felt that any faned doing this must not have anything better to do, the consensus was that the distribution of unpublished egoboo should be a common practice. In fact, many fans come on quite strongly in favor of this.

ED CAGLE: "Sending unpublished comments to authors should be a common practice." JACKIE FRANKS: "Love it!!!" PAUL WALKER: "Although I've never experienced it, I think it's an excellent idea." DAVE HULAN: "I think that if more editors did that it would make me more likely to consider writing something for them, for whatever it's worth." ERIC MAYER: "Denis Quane sent me two pages of unpublished comments. I loved it. Feedback is what makes fanwriting fun. The more feedback the better." MIKE GLICKSOHN: "I suspect I'd be very flattered and pleased were it to happen." BOB TUCKER: "I like this very much, whether the excerpts are favorable or unfavorable. I wish all editors did it." JODIE OFFUTT: "I think it's a great idea!" ED COX: "I think it is a good idea and some sort of concerted effort among faneds, a fandom-wide campaign, ought to be started." D. GARY GRADY: "I am in favor of it. In fact, I think it should have been standard practice a long time ago." ALEXIS GILLILAND: "A courtesy. It is

also the mark of an editor who will exhort his writers to do their utmost, marking (as it were) the pros among faneds." GREG BENFORD: "Excellent--it's only happened a few times, and I've always liked it. Overall, I'm amazed at how lazy faneds are as editors. Simple courtesy." DEAN GREENELL: "I think it's a splendid idea, Dave Locke!" HARRY WARNER: "I like it." SANDRA MIESEL: "It is considerate of the editor to quote comments he was not able to use in the lettercolumn." MILT STEVENS: "I appreciate it." LON ATKINS: "Gee, somebody once sent me unpublished commentary. When I recovered from the shock, I enjoyed it." SUSAN WOOD: "It's a great idea, and I wish more editors would do it!"

Some time ago it struck me that fanwriters and fanartists get nothing for their efforts except throwaway comments in a lettercolumn, and that most throwaway comments are read only by the faneditors and then thrown away. That seemed somehow negligent. So, as people on my mailing lists are aware, I've been pushing the concept of D.U.E. (Disseminating Unpublished Egoboo). I note in my fanzines, on my letters of comment, and on my articles, that "I support D.U.E." To me the concept is sensible, courteous, fair, and--as I know from practicing it myself--not much work in comparison to all the benefits inherent in the idea.

The question was included on the poll to prod fanwriters into focusing attention and expressing themselves on the subject. And, now that I've got them all stirred up, it's time to start on the faneditors... But I can't head them off at the pass alone. Since you like the idea of D.U.E., support it.

THE SEVENTH QUESTION:

"How do you view the matter of publishing your own material as opposed to submitting it to someone else for publication?"

Roughly half the respondents like to publish their own material, for various reasons:

DAVE HULAN: "There are several advantages to publishing all your own stuff, the biggest of which is that you can guarantee that you'll see any egoboo it garners. Also, there's no fear of rejection (not that I have much of that anymore), and no prospect that it's going to be blindingly outshone by someone else's material elsewhere in the same zine."

LEIGH EDMONDS: "I don't have to try and please the other editor."

DON D'AMASSA: "I have total control over those articles and can write at lengths and on subjects that would be difficult to place with other fanzines."

BRUCE ARTHURS: "You know how much editing will be done on it, you know when it'll be published, you're responsible for the layout and illos used, and the response comes directly to you, not edited through a letter column."

HARRY WARNER: "The only difference is the fact that I can control immediate circulation if I publish it, so I am sometimes franker in FAPA than in material in general fanzines."

MILT STEVENS: "Publishing my own material gives me much greater freedom. For instance, I wouldn't have sent out the article I did on the Old Testament to another fanzine, but I did publish it myself."

LON ATKINS: "I can do my own layout, which is fun. It's convenient, can meander as I please, and provides rampant arrogant egoism."

LOREN MacGREGOR: "If I have a specific topic, a certain amount of ground I want to cover, I prefer to do it in my own fanzine, as I feel justified in using my own space. But when I'm submitting to someone else, I'm forced to condense my material, which makes it more effective. In other words, I ramble. However, as far as the physical presentation goes--I know what I want, and pretty much have my layout in mind before I start on an editorial, or article, or book review. In my own fanzine I can concretize it--in someone else's fanzine I'm subject to their layout sense, and sense of style."

SUSAN WOOD: "I prefer this form of communication; I know my audience; and I know the stuff'll see print eventually!"

Most of those who like to submit their manuscripts to other fans either haven't the time or inclination for the mechanics of fanzine publishing, or they like to submit material to other zines as well as publishing their own material.

The resulting fanwriting spans a wide range. Sturgeon's Law applies with a vengeance. If a dull critic holds up a crudzine beside FGSF he finds confirmation for the two level theory. Even critics such as these admit that there is good fanwriting--how else could profans evolve? If every fan were going to be a pro science fiction writer when they grew up, there might be a bit of truth in this idea; but is such the case? Let's look at fanwriting within its own context.

Disposing of magick, and assured by examination that practically all styles are represented in fanwriting, we approach topic. Science fiction has already been mentioned. In fact, many types of off-trails literature are treated in fanwriting. The only pariah is mainstream work. (Maybe this is by way of retribution.) Reviews, news of publishing events and pro writers, and survey articles abound. This is one of the four categories.

Personal essays and natter are a third category--and the true wealth of fanwriting. In a world where autobiographies are ghost-written, where interviews are contrived for maximum sales impact, it's a marvel that fans can write about themselves as people and find an interested audience. I don't believe that fandom realizes what a wonderful thing this is. It's an expression most people find only in personal letters, if then. It's a window on a broad cross-section of Western life. Hidden within the body of fanwriting, the personal essay lives and prospers.

At one time or another I've been active in most aspects of fan-writing. I'm most comfortable with faaanwriting. It's the area I want to examine in more detail. When I said faaanwriting was our attempt at magick, I meant it was an effort to create an absolutely special place where fans alone can go. Our entrance criterion is interest. If an ordinary mortal cares enough to learn our language and tribal customs, then by definition he has become a fan by the time he can understand us. Pathetic little walls to surround a magic kingdom, but were the walls higher there'd be more magick in them than in the kingdom.

The theme of all faaanwriting is the fan. Perhaps fan in the Microcosm, or fan encountering the Outside World, but fan nevertheless. In this sense, faaanwriting is frequently related to the personal essay. It's more narcissism than exposition, however. To succeed, faaanwriting must inject personality into froth. It takes a healthy ego to do this.

Humor sometimes leads to irreverence. In fanwriting this surfaces as iconoclasm. The sacred idols of the Outside World are especially juicy targets, though the fanworld itself doesn't escape. Fannish iconoclasm frequently takes the form of exaggerated or fictional accounts. Dean Swift knew the value. These romps can cut sharply or simply provide entertainment. The convention of affectionate insult is well established in faaan-writing. It stretches back to the pre-fanhistory era. Indeed, the principle involved is egoboo--a prime motivator in faaan-writing.

The reciprocal egoboo linkage is important in other ways. It condones the affectionate insult. It enhances the sthick with amplifying feedback. It abets contribution, especially in the cartoon art area, which is a delightful adjunct to faaanwriting. Good faaanwriting isn't a one-person show. It's group therapy--and, ohhhhhh, it can feel so good!

--- Lon Atkins

[illegible]

---Dave Locke



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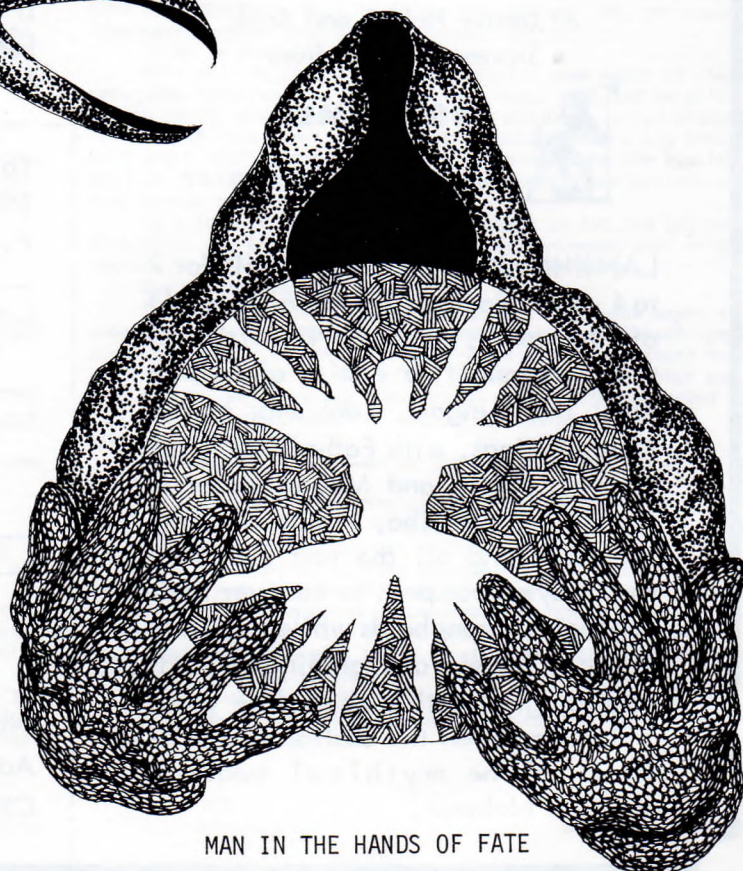
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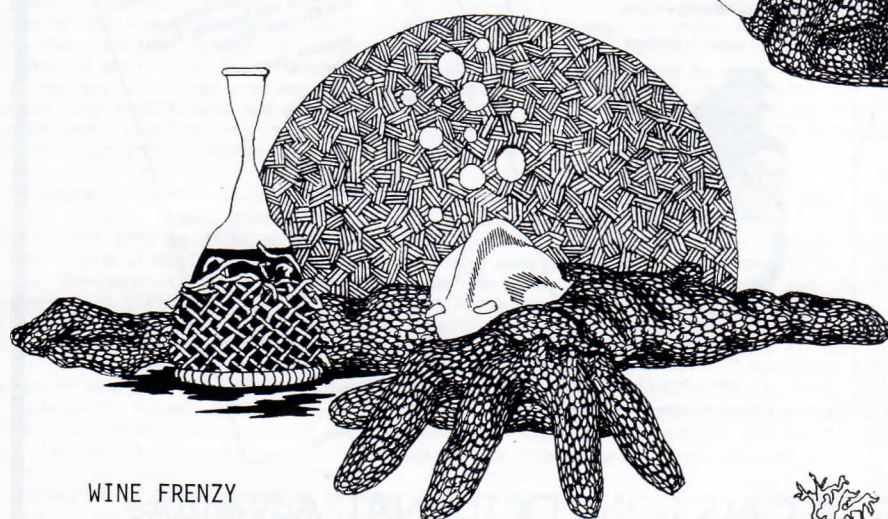
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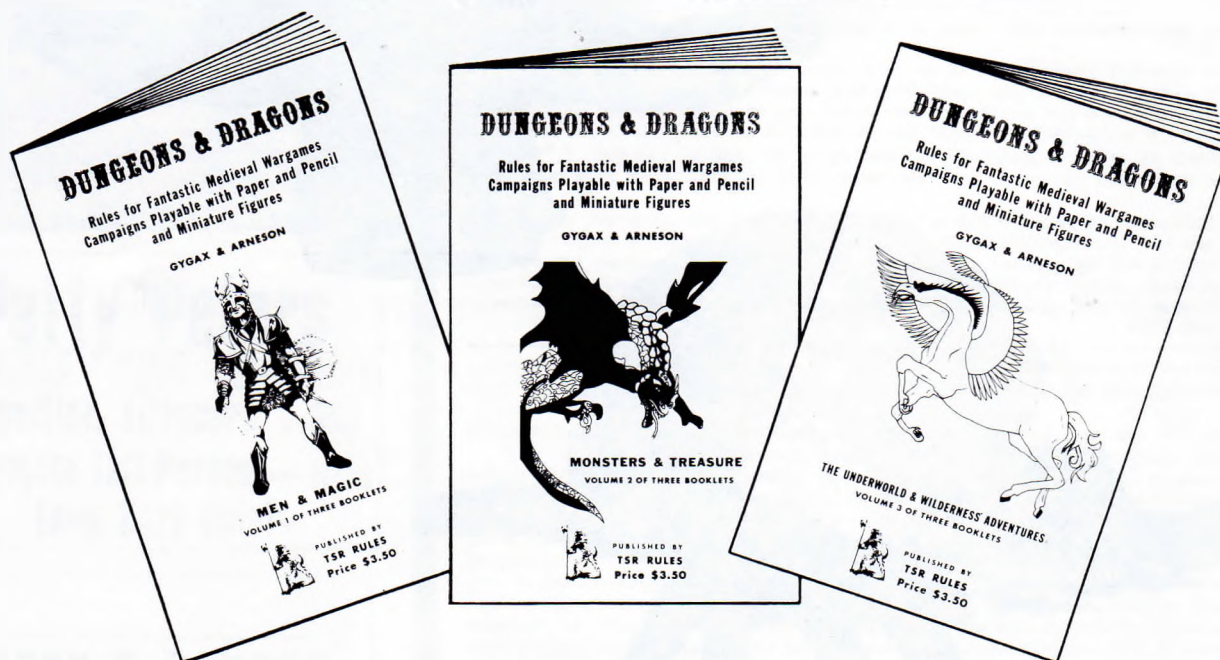
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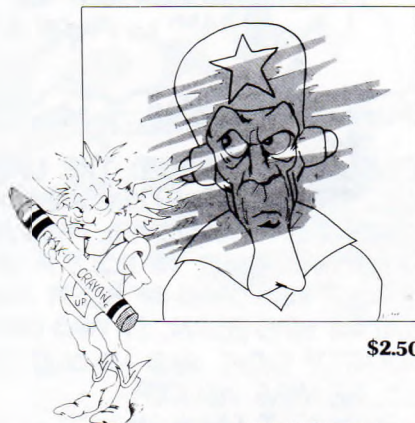
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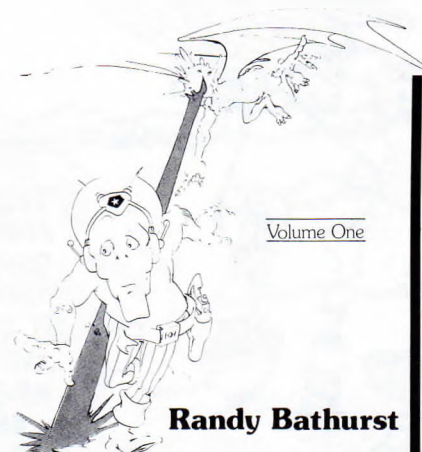
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OUTWORLD PRODUCTIONS

OTHER PLACES, OTHER TIMES



Volume One

Randy Bathurst

ALL RIGHT, THIS IS IMPORTANT!

...if you read this AND your mailing label, it could save both of us a lot of time...and considerable postage.

ITEM: Yes, this issue counts as 2 off subscriptions. (A number of subs ended with #28, which created a minor problem. Rather than "biling" you, I am sending this issue, and trusting that--if there is a "28" on your label--you will send me the \$1.00 you owe me. Some would say that I'm being foolish, but...

ITEM: No, *Outworlds* #27.5 has NOT been published yet. I hope to have it out before year's end...but no promises. If you've paid for it, your label will have an "O". (If you came in late, 27.5 will be a 40-page lettercolumn issue containing comments on #25, #26 & #27. Print run will be limited.)

ITEM: Yes, there will be one more fractional issue--containing the comments received on *this* issue, the poll results, and the Index to Volume Seven. Tentatively titled *Outworlds: EPILOGUE*, it will be out *sometime* in the spring. Availability: same as 27.5.

LIBRARIES will receive #27, #28/29, plus #27.5 (which will be designated Volume Seven, Number 2) and the *EPILOGUE* for '76 subs.

THE NEXT ISSUE of *Outworlds*--#30--will be out at SUNCON (Labor Day, '77), if not before. I hope it will be well before, but I'm making no commitments to publish before I have the material I want. I will, for the time being, continue to accept subs to the "new" OW at the old rates--i.e., 4/\$5.00--but that is subject to (upward, of course) revision at any time. (I hope to hold the cover price at \$1.50...but that depends mainly on advertising income, and how well the "books" do--the first is plugged above...)

I WILL BE PAYING modest amounts for written material--probably 1¢ a word for articles & most fiction (with a higher rate for Names) and for art at rates comparable with *Algol*. Payment will be on publication for at least the first two issues; I don't like doing it that way, but I have no choice. Wants? Primarily "straight" SF stories with some substance. Really. First N.A. Serial Rights bought. Enclose self-addressed stamped envelope. Please?

UNCLASSIFIED ADS

FANZINE DIRECTORY--1976 edition lists 100s of current SF, comix, Trek fanzines. 60¢ or trade: STEVEN BEATTY, 303 Welsh #6, Ames, IA 50010

MOONBROTH has monsters, werewolves, vampires, witchcraft, occult fiction, fact, illustrations. Introductory copy - 25¢. Dept. O, 616 NE 118th, Portland, Oregon 97220.

OUTWORLDS PRODUCTIONS, INC. will publish at least two items in the spring, before OW #30: A quality paperback edition of THE DOUBLE: BILL SCIENCE FICTION SYMPOSIUM -- and a rather fantastic Derek Carter art folio entitled THE BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE. Several other projects are in various stages, but too early to announce. All items will be extensively advertised, so hang on...

I WILL BE publishing a fanzine...which I childishly refuse to reveal the title of, so far: let's call it "X" for the nounce...to replace, or whatever, OW. It will be available for one of two reasons: by Editorial Whim, or for \$1.00 a copy. The "whim" will include some trades (but a lot less than now) and may or may not include loc credit. I am reluctant to offer if for cash in many ways, but we'll see. It will be small, simple (for me!), and have no pretense at a schedule at all. It probably won't be "worth" a buck. It will be primarily me, and people-fannish slanted--the things that I ran here that won't "fit" in the new OW. I do not want a big circulation; I will not have a big circulation. It will not be advertised or pushed. The first issue will be out sometime after 1/1/77; if there's an "O" on your mailing label, you will get it. (If there's not, that doesn't mean you won't get it--but you never know...)

MONIES received to date will apply to the "new" *Outworlds*. LoCs & other non-cash "credit" will apply to the two lettercol OW's, and will have some bearing on whether you get "X" or not--but won't be carried over as such. "X" will be a fresh start. ## One more thing: A "nt" means I appreciate the trade(s) you've sent--but that I (probably) won't be trading "X" with you. Sorry.

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IN THIS AGE OF CONCRETE, STEEL AND MUD JABBCON ONE

Augal 14th to Augal 6th,

1436 (Jabberwitch Time)

THE BEER GLASSES CLINKED, THE UNQUOTEABLE QUOTES FLEW FREE, AND A SMALL DRUNKEN ENGLISHMAN LEANED ON THE DRUNK FROM OHIO AS THEY BOTH SURVEYED THE MESS THAT WAS A CON PARTY AND KNEW IT WAS TIME TO HOLD A CON IN A PLACE OF CHARACTER. IT TOOK ABOUT ONE CASE OF BEER AND JABBCON 1, TO BE HELD IN JABBERWITCH WAS BORN. IT WAS ONE HELL OF A BIRTH, THE LIMEY WAS VIOLENTLY SICK AND NO ONE KNOWS HOW THE OHIO DRUNK REACTED. HE WAS ASLEEP.

Jabberwitch in Jabberwitch. The Hotel Foon, a rambling 4 or 5, sometimes even 8 storey thing, the staging of the All-Jabberwitch Nurdling Finals (The game that makes Rollerball look like Rollerball), a visit to the Fine Foon Ale Company during the blonking of the Quot Festival, a chance to amble freely over the steam-driven Appolla IV $\frac{1}{2}$, a film program that should include "STAR TRUCK" with old Cap'n Crock on his 50 year mission collecting Space garbage, as GoH that well known lady Jumbly Moral author of several if not more while the foon world will be represented by that mouldy heap of disrepute, the wonder whizz himself - Monicle Click Zone - all jammed loosely into a one week con (if there's 3 days in it unless it's fourth Sunday of the year or two Mondays at either end) and only costing 12 measly Krobbbits (or 4 Krobbbits a day). Oh yes an Art Show of sorts and a room full of dealers you can deal for.

Transport is by way of those vast wooden balloons of the JABBERWITCH AIR LINES (the only way to travel. To Jabberwitch that is). See your travel agent - and confuse the bastard.

Of course some of you may hedge at the 12 Krobbbit price tag so we've come up with a supporting membership entitling you to the two strangest progress reports we've ever seen - 20"x30" each, black and white and hardly a word on 'em but you'll sure as hell know what Jabberwitch looks like should you decide to hitch to the Con. Send \$3.00 for the two to:-

DEREK CARTER, Con chairman and all round person,

719 YONGE STREET, SUITE 201A,
TORONTO, ONTARIO, M4Y 2B5.

Oops! - A Krobbbit is equal to about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ Grizeldarhn Bumblefuffers.

JABBCON ONE
FEE YOU FOON!!!

